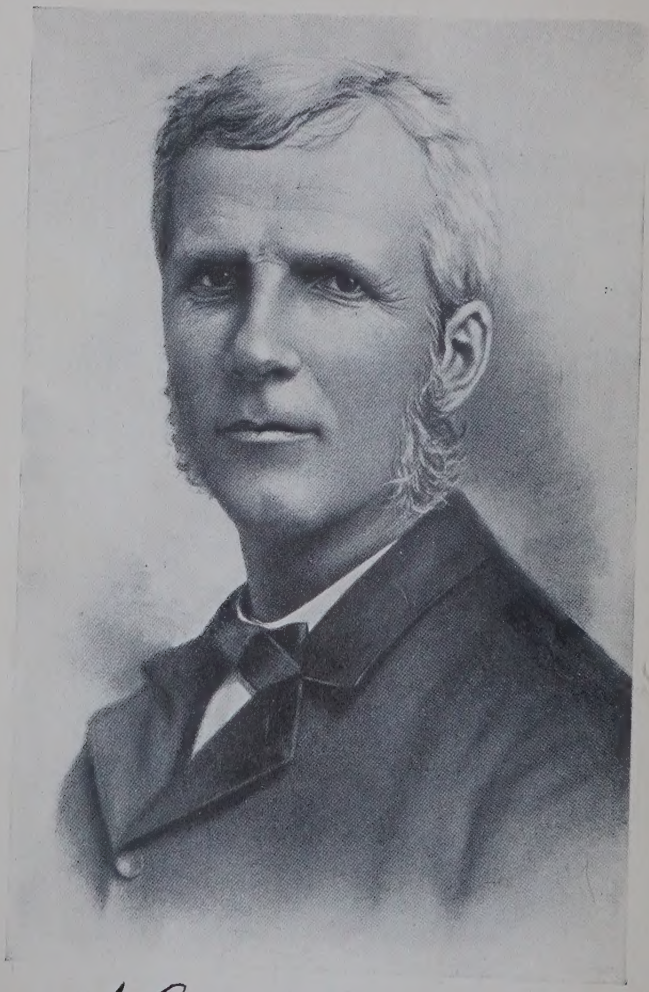
SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG

A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY



Yours Most Sincerely
L. C. Armstrong.

Samuel Chapman Armstrong

A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

By

EDITH ARMSTRONG TALBOT

NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
1904

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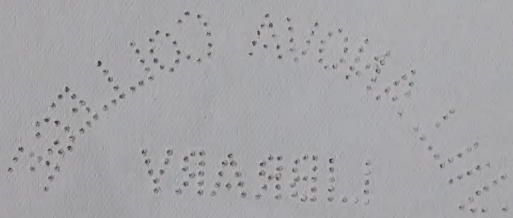

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PREFACE

This brief outline of my father's life, work and character is written in the hope that it may be read not only by those who knew him, but by those to whom the name of Samuel Armstrong suggests no personal memories.

The scenes amid which he moved in his early life have already become unreal in the dimness of a historic past; many of the problems with which he struggled are solved; even in the ten years which have elapsed since his death such a change has come over Negro affairs that their earlier aspects are almost forgotten. To reanimate these bygone conditions and difficulties which he daily confronted, and more than all to show in the midst of many intricate activities the man himself, an embodiment of life and aspiration combating by sheer determination all discouragement and hesitancy—this is my aim.

This aim alone justifies a disregard of his especial request that no biography of himself should be written. He read many biographies. Some of them he liked and received from them help and encouragement, while others impressed him as "pretty good stories" written by "kind friends" to perpetuate agreeable personal memories. He

greatly feared that such treatment would be given him when he was no longer able to defend himself; to be canonized was a fate that he really dreaded. Nevertheless, he felt the value of the simple and sincere story of a useful life; and had he thought that the telling of his own life-story would strengthen a single impulse for good or encourage a single struggler, he would have cordially assented to the telling of it. Remembering his preferences, I have omitted such details of his personal life as satisfy a merely curious interest.

I wish to express my thanks first of all to my husband; to Doctor Talcott Williams, Professor LeBaron R. Briggs, Colonel T. W. Higginson, Mr. Robert C. Ogden, Mr. Bliss Perry, General O. O. Howard, Mr. Herbert Welsh, and Reverend H. B. Frissell, for their kind and generous interest in this book, as well as to those who have lent their treasured letters for publication.

Edith Armstrong Talbot.

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PART I

SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG

SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG

CHAPTER I

Hawaiian Life. 1839–1860

The history of a man's childhood is the description of his parents and environment.—Carlyle.

SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG was fortunate in both parentage and environment. He was born January 30, 1839, on the island of Maui, Hawaiian Islands, and brought up amid the soft airs and noble scenery of that beautiful tropical archipelago. Maui contains one of the most striking natural features of the group, the extinct crater of Haleakala, which thrusts its head into the clouds 10,000 feet above the sea-level, and on the grassy slopes of this mountain, overlooking the island and the surrounding sea, was his birthplace and the home of his parents, Richard and Clarissa Armstrong, missionaries to the Hawaiians. Although the family remained in Maui but a year after his birth, he always retained a peculiar fondness for it, returning to it often as a boy for horseback rambles among its forests and gorges. He gloried in its splendid peaks and coasts; and about Haleakala (the House of the Sun) centered in later life his thoughts of rest and inspiration.

The Armstrongs were people of the pioneer type, fitted to enter into unbroken fields and prepare them for later fruitfulness; full of strength; able to endure and to hand down their power of endurance to their children.

The father came of Scotch-Irish parentage, and was reared in central Pennsylvania, in that wholesome farm life from which have sprung so many men of power. Rather delicate in health, he was regarded as predestined for the ministry, and when of the proper age entered Princeton Theological Seminary. While there he became convinced that his work lay in the mission field, and spent his vacations and spare time studying medicine in Philadelphia in order to prepare himself more fully for this work. On applying to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions for a position in the Hawaiian Islands, he was accepted by them and prepared to assume his new duties at the earliest opportunity. About this time—in March, 1830—he wrote home:

"Perhaps you may be somewhat surprised at the course I have chosen, and will be ready to ask, 'Why not preach among the destitute at home?' In answer to this I would say that the choice is not my own; it appears to be marked out for me by Him whom I am bound to serve forever. The American Board wish to send out twenty missionaries in eighteen months. Most likely I shall be one of them. Then farewell, America, and farewell earthly enjoyments."

The farewell to earthly enjoyments, however, was preceded by a happy event which, with the completion of medical and theological courses, marked the last few months of his stay in America. In September he was married to Clarissa Chapman, of Blandford, Massachusetts.

Clarissa Chapman had been reared in the same plain farm life to which he himself was accustomed, and was endowed with a fine physique and many practical aptitudes. She wrote of her own early life:

"In those days women did their own housework, and it was thought disgraceful to be lazy or untidy. Daughters worked with their mothers and sons with their fathers. The spinning of wool and flax and tow, the knitting and weaving by the fire while one read aloud, and the singing of sacred hymns, were the pleasures. I learned to do all kinds of household work, and also often assisted my father, who was crippled by rheumatism, in the care of the cows and sheep—an experience for which in my years of wandering I have often had occasion to be deeply thankful."

But she had parents who saw in their daughter possibilities of something more than routine farm work, and who, in spite of the scoffing of neighbours, sent her away to be educated. When she met Richard Armstrong she had been graduated from the Westfield (Massachusetts) Normal School, partly through her own efforts, partly through the help her parents were able to give her, and was holding a position as teacher in a Pestalozzian Infant

School in Brooklyn, New York, one of the earliest of schools to introduce from Germany the educational ideas whose later developments found expression in the kindergarten.

She was looking forward cheerfully to the uneventful life of a teacher, when Richard Armstrong, vivacious, impassioned, and demonstrative, a true Irishman and her very antithesis, captured her heart and persuaded her that the Divine call to which he had listened was addressed to her also. Neither dreamed that the future held worldly success and influence for them; it was the love of God and a desire for the coming of His kingdom that alone gave them courage as they set sail westward on board the brig *Thaddeus* on a dark November day in 1831. Mutiny on board the ship, and, owing to head winds and consequent delay, a lack of provisions, made the voyage a severe tax on the endurance of the young bride and groom; the only pleasant incident recorded by Mrs. Armstrong in her journal of this voyage is the stop for repairs at Rio Janeiro. Of this she wrote:

"How delightful it was! The green grass, the fresh fruits! It was indeed paradise; but the trail of the serpent was there. On an open space I saw a long trail of black men, miserably clad, chained together, while beside them were others with great bags of coffee on their heads, chanting a mournful lay. From that day my sympathies went out to the poor slaves everywhere, but little did I think I should live to rear a son

who should lead the freedmen to victory in the great contest which should come in future years."

At last Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong reached the port of Honolulu in safety and began their work of preaching and teaching there.

At the end of a year, in which a daughter was born to them, they were sent on a dangerous mission to the Marquesas Islands, inhabited by cannibals, where they lived a year in friendliest relation to these fierce folk, and succeeded in holding in check their cannibal habits. Here their second child, who lived but a short time, was born. That husband and wife were made of hardy stuff is shown by the fact that Mr. Armstrong, when compelled to return to Honolulu for a short time, left his wife, infant son,* and little daughter in charge of a cannibal chief, who was, as Mrs. Armstrong noted in a letter, "indescribably horrible in appearance," but who guarded them in safety for weeks by lying in front of their tent every night.

Owing to its peculiar difficulties they were unable to make permanent impressions at this post, and foreseeing reversion to cannibal habits, were recalled to Honolulu, only to be sent away in a few days to the island of Maui, a distance of three days' journey by water from Honolulu.

Here was a more promising field for labour. Maui was a thickly settled, fertile district, inhabited

*Born while in the Marquesas Islands, and named by the parents after their ferocious friend, Hapi.

by a gentle, willing people who flocked gladly to listen to their new teacher. Here Richard Armstrong remained for seven years, and here his peculiar administrative powers found full play. Besides the duties of his pastorate, he assumed the medical oversight of his flock of 25,000 natives and the organization and superintendence of schools for 1,700 children. He saw the need of steady industrial occupation for the natives, and it was through him that the first sawmills and sugar plantations on the island of Maui were started. He foresaw the need of diversified crops, and instructed the natives in the first principles of tilling the land, which had been heretofore untouched by them, since their simple desires were satisfied with its natural fruits. His son Samuel writes later of this time:

"[My father] used to tell us of the two churches that he built here, one over each [missionary] station, each to hold 1,500 people. He planned and superintended the whole work without any carpenter. The timbers of the roof were hewn far up on the mountains, brought down on the backs of natives, and placed on walls of broken stone laid in mortar made from coral brought up from the sea by native divers. Once, when a storm destroyed the work of months, the people, led by their chief, went willingly to the mountains and began again. Although my father nearly broke down here, yet afterward, when in the service of the Government, he spoke of these as the happiest days of his life, for his own hardships were forgotten in remembering how gladly the people heard and, in their weakness, followed like children."

BIRTHPLACE OF SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG ON THE ISLAND OF MAUI, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

While the Armstrongs were at Maui a strange incident of history occurred, and one in which they themselves bore no small part. For twenty years the Hawaiian people had been listening patiently to the teachings of Christian missionaries, many becoming converts; but no impression was made on the mass of the people till the years 1838 and 1839, when a series of waves of religious enthusiasm swept the whole nation, as it were, into the Christian fold in a day. Rulers, chiefs, and people resigned their heathen beliefs, asking only to be taught the law of Christ.

During the great revival Richard and Clarissa Armstrong worked with all their might to secure and intensify good results. If any were skeptical of the value of this hothouse Christianity they were not of them, and, like the Church at home, they regarded the conversion of numbers as the proof of missionary success. While the husband and father addressed great meetings, the wife and mother, in spite of the care of her five children and her prospect of again becoming a mother, found time and strength to gather the women about her nightly and exhort them earnestly to a better life, or to address large audiences when occasion demanded. Who shall say that her son was not influenced by that time of spiritual upheaval in the midst of which he was born?

Richard Armstrong's years at Maui had revealed to the American Board of Commissioners for

Foreign Missions, who stood *in loco parentis* to the missionaries in the field, his administrative skill, and in 1840 he was moved from Maui to Honolulu and installed in charge of the First Church, attended by a large native congregation.

In order to understand the influences that surrounded Samuel Armstrong's childhood, one must glance at the history of the relation between the plastic, pleasure-loving native and the stern New England teacher, who would have about him equal rights for all and a wholesome theory of sober and righteous living, based, perhaps, rather on New England than on tropical conditions. The period of 1820 to 1840 had been throughout a period of great change for the Hawaiian people. They had gradually embraced Christianity, established courts of justice, granted universal suffrage with slight property qualifications, established a system of schools throughout the islands so that in 1835 the natives who could read and write were numbered by thousands, and passed laws against drinking, gambling, Sabbath-breaking, and social vice which would have done credit to a New England village and which were at times enforced. These changes, which the Anglo-Saxon race has been hundreds of years in making, were consummated in twenty by the aid of the second and third Kamchamehas, whose beneficent rule culminated in the year 1839 in the passage of a bill of rights which established the right of the common people to hold land, a

right heretofore the prerogative of kings and chiefs, and the liberty to worship how and where they would. These rulers, themselves fairly attentive hearers of the words of the missionaries, were the first to embrace Christianity and to teach it to their people.

But however zealous the chiefs and however zealous the people, the improvement in manners and morals among the natives did not keep pace with the improvement in civil government and forms of worship. The King, followed by chiefs and people, wavered between the good influences that in the main governed their public course and the temptations of their sensual Polynesian natures. In a land where fish, fruit and the taro could be had with little toil, habits of industry were not indispensable to happiness. Like the old-time Negroes, they made their religion their chief business in life; like them, they delighted in "speaking in meeting," and were born orators; but they found a strict adherence to the Ten Commandments on week-days rather burdensome. "The heathen saint is about up to your New England sinner," as Armstrong remarked later. Where one-roomed huts, with perhaps a curtain for the guest, were the rule, no high standard of social morality could be expected.

To complicate the problem of dealing justly and effectively with this simple people, drink, vice, and diseases heretofore unknown in Hawaii were being

introduced by the crews of whaling vessels. Moreover, the beauty, fertility and commercial advantages of these islands had from the first attracted scheming men, sometimes working in the name of a foreign government, sometimes independently, but always for the furtherance of their own plans. The governments of Great Britain and France saw the advantage to the United States in the political ascendency of the missionaries and strove to counteract it at court and among the people, each through its agents attempting by force to gain possession of the islands. Many Americans also, opposed to the aims of the missionaries, and foreseeing in their control possible hindrances to their own plans, allied themselves with the anti-missionary party.

It is a curious fact in the history of the Hawaiian Islands that a group of men, originally non-political in their relations to the natives, should have become allied closely with the governing forces. Church and state were never more completely one than in Hawaii under missionary influence. There are many instances in the history of heathen countries of dishonest and ambitious white men who have played on the vices of native rulers to further their own selfish ends, but few, if any, except in Hawaii, of white men of a high type who have accepted responsible positions in the king's gift and worked with and through him for his people. In the Hawaiian Islands the highest political positions,

such as Minister of Finance and of Public Instruction, were filled by missionaries. It was into a complicated political and social situation that Richard Armstrong found himself transferred by his removal to Honolulu.

He began his work simply as a preacher, but his interests and ability soon drew him (in 1840) into public life, though he never gave up his public preaching, partly in deference to the wishes of the Missionary Board, who did not encourage much devotion to secular affairs, and partly because he wished to retain a direct hold on the natives.*

Samuel's childhood, like the prime of his father's life, was spent in the midst of the clash of political parties, but he grew up all unconscious of it. To him the conversion of the natives and the fatherly kindness and self-sacrifice shown by the missionary teachers appeared dominant, and if he thought of

*At the time of his death the reigning king, Kamehameha, wrote describing his services to the natives as follows.

"Doctor Armstrong has been spoken of as Minister of Public Instruction and subsequently President of the Board of Education, but we have only partly described the important offices which he filled. He was a member of the House of Nobles and of the King's Privy Council, Secretary of the Board of Trustees of Oahu College, Trustee of the Queen's Hospital, executive officer of the Bible and Tract Society, and deeply interested in developing the agricultural resources of the kingdom.

"No other government officer or missionary was brought into such close intimacy with the native as a whole. Although his week-day duties were so abundant and onerous, he never spared himself as a minister of the Gospel. He was an eloquent preacher in the Hawaiian language, and was always listened to with deep interest by the people in whose welfare he took so deep an interest. Nearly every Sabbath his voice was to be heard in some one of the pulpits of the land."

their opposers, it was as bad men representing Satan in the world, with whom he need not hold any intercourse. So the missionary children, a colony large enough for play independent of other Caucasian youngsters who might be about, enjoyed themselves in their own little world.

Honolulu in 1840 was a small town with a cluster of mercantile houses and grog-shops, where fifty to a hundred whalers called annually for supplies, and where some commerce in sandalwood was still carried on.

A little way back from the water, toward the mountains, were the mission houses, built of adobe or wood, the houses of the higher chiefs, and the old palace where the Kamehamehas reigned in a sort of opéra-bouffe grandeur. The town boasted but two other buildings of importance—a brick schoolhouse for the children of foreign residents, and Richard Armstrong's church, the Kawaiahao, a great coral-built edifice then in process of erection.

The Armstrong home, "Stone House," was one of the pleasantest in Honolulu; set well back in a fine grove and garden, it sheltered comfortably the eight children who grew to manhood and womanhood there.

Samuel Armstrong's brightest recollections of his home centered in his merry, blue-eyed father, who had always a smile and a caress for the clustering young ones—"silent, tranquil, patient, and

THE ENTRANCE TO STONE HOUSE AT HONOLULU

loving," as one of the younger children describes him; alert, wiry, always busy, he carried on all his duties with a light heart. All the mission children loved him, and he was the first to gather them into a class for the purpose of learning the Hawaiian language—a step which was regarded with suspicion by many of the mission mothers, who feared lest knowledge of the Hawaiian tongue might bring their boys into too close contact with that easy-going native life which represented to their minds such fearful laxity of morals. But Richard Armstrong was less afraid that the young people would be contaminated by contact with the Hawaiians than that they should fail to understand that race with which they were to have to deal in the future, and so in spite of the frowns of the mothers the class went on.

Stone House might have been a rendezvous for the missionary children were it not for a certain awe which Mrs. Armstrong unconsciously inspired as she moved with stately dignity about her work. Her unsmiling mien constrained them and they went elsewhere for their little games. It was a stern household, where the rod was not spared, and where many instincts, now called natural, were, after the manner of the day, repressed. But in it justice, truth and respect for duty were thoroughly inculcated. Both parents had been trained in other households, where right was put before pleasure, and both had encountered such stress in

life that moral strength appeared to them the greatest need of the growing mind.

Mrs. Armstrong's serious manner was the result not only of a certain Puritan habit of repression, but of an intense moral earnestness. Besides the care of her large family, she was deeply interested in work for the native Hawaiians. She conducted sewing and Bible classes, and gathered about her the lowest outcasts of Chinatown, urging the women to leave their lives of sin. Her training in the science of education gave her a peculiar interest in matters pertaining to the home and to women and children, and to them she mainly devoted her energies. "She was a worker," said one who knew her well at this time; "her great characteristic was to do her work truthfully and well and to seize on opportunities."

In such a home-setting one can imagine little Samuel barefooted, clad in faded blue denim, among his crowd of brothers and sisters and playmates, blond and slim, full of his father's fun, with long, shaggy hair tossed back from dancing eyes, rushing in and out of the water after his little boats, to make and sail which was the greatest delight of Honolulu boys, with their facilities of reef-locked harbour and constant trade-wind. As marbles, chess, and cards were not allowed, and as football was unknown, baseball (in which Samuel was never proficient), swimming, sailing and riding were the sports among boys, followed,

as the players advanced from the age of blue denim trousers into that of great care for neckties, by choir practice, debating clubs, and horseback rides by night. There were glorious dashes over the moonlit sands, twenty or thirty couples of boys and girls abreast, when the game was to have one extra man, then break the ranks and let all try for a place in the line with one of the girls. There were week-long excursions and upward dashes to the cool mountain-tops, where the cataracts had their birth and whence one could overlook the ocean rising on all sides to the level of the eye like a great blue saucer. "He was a high-spirited youth," says one who knew young Armstrong well in those times, "with an abrupt manner of looking up, shaking his hair from his eyes. He used to say that he would be a politician or a business man—that he would be a philanthropist was the furthest from our thoughts."

His childhood and boyhood are best described in his own words, written in a chapter of reminiscences by him some forty years later, in which the circumstances of that far-away childhood appear more idyllic for the lapse of years.

"For several summers after our arrival in Honolulu we spent some months at Makawao, high up on Haleakala, at Mr. McLane's sugar plantation, where the view of mountain and ocean was magnificent. Here donkey-riding, eating sugar-cane, hanging round the sugar-house, bathing in the deep gulches, and exploring

the wild country and tropic forests filled what were the happiest days of our lives. How exciting it was when we were pulled round into Maalea Bay in whaleboats or sailed in the *Maria*, and Captain Hobson, in default of a white flag, sent one of father's shirts up to the masthead, to announce the arrival of a missionary party. With our belongings we were piled into ox-carts, and after five hours' slow pulling up the sides of Haleakala would at last reach 'Makawao,' to be greeted by the smiling Hawaiian housewife, 'Maile.' In those days the natives brought their kumu (teacher) their accustomed tribute of fruit, vegetables, chickens, etc., thus eking out the small salary of (I believe) $300 for each couple and $50 extra for each child. Those were days of cheerful greetings, youthful rejoicings, and fatherly benedictions, when the people came—in a minimum of costume—from far and near with bananas, sugar-cane, guavas, cocoanuts, and delicious ohia.

"The large crop of small boys that swarmed about the mission had the usual piratical instincts of their kind, and although we were all subjected to the severest Puritanic discipline, we managed to execute occasional raids on the barrel of lump sugar in the mission depository when good Mr. Cooke and Mr. Castle were not looking. The 'Maternal Association' took up the more hopeless cases of those who played checkers or said 'By George!' The boys were thrown into convulsions when one of our number reported hearing an excited missionary father say 'By Jingo!'

"We had one real luxury—that of being barefooted all the year round, wearing shoes on Sunday only, and then under protest. The Sunday morning cleaning-up and dressing was looked forward to with dread, as our sympathies were all with the natives, who, in

the early days, took off their clothes when it rained, so that a shower as church was closing produced an extraordinary scene. The material of our usual garments was a blue denim of the cheapest kind, which, to allow for the growth of the wearer, was made with two or three tucks in the trousers legs. These being successively let out after many washings, made a series of humiliating bright blue bands about our ankles. I can remember wearing aprons, which I took every opportunity to discard, although I invariably came to grief from so doing, as the rod in those days was laid on freely.

"Molasses-and-water was bliss to us, and ginger-cake was too good to be true. . . . We went barefoot, we were hungry, and felt the ferule about our hands and shoulders, and had our lunches stolen by the other hungry boys, and had prayer meeting out among the rocks, and learned seven honest verses by heart for Sunday-school, besides the catechism at home. The small boy of to-day tries to be a gentleman, which we never dreamed of; our ambition was, after getting out of sight of home, to throw away our last vestment—the checked apron fastened around our necks by fond mothers—and then in native rollicking freedom delight in sea, in salt ponds and wild mountains.

"We went to Mr. Castle's Sunday-school and also to the 'Bethel.' We were required to recite seven Bible verses to Mr. Castle, and to bow as we went out, which later ceremony was particularly obnoxious to us and gave rise to much cutting-up. I was a pupil at the 'Bethel' of General Marshall and Mr. C. R. Bishop, and from them received my first instruction in 'Let dogs delight to bark and bite,' etc.

"Father's chief work was preaching, and I am sorry

to say that, although we always attended the services, the part we took in them was sometimes far from creditable. We usually sat with mother, and were kept quiet by frequent gingerbread, but I remember that once father took two of us into the pulpit and was obliged to interrupt his sermon in order to settle a quarrel between us. But nothing disturbed the equanimity of the natives, not even the dog-fights, which were of frequent occurrence, for they doted on dogs, often bringing them to church in their arms, while the children toddled on behind.

"These dogs were a perpetual trial. I have seen deacons with long sticks probing after the wretched curs as they dodged under the seats, the preacher scolding roundly the while, and not a smile in the congregation.

"But the services were interesting. Sometimes when I stand outside a Negro church I get precisely the effect of a Hawaiian congregation, the same fulness and heartiness and occasional exquisite voices, and am instantly transplanted 10,000 miles away, to the great Kawaiahao church where father used to preach to 2,500 people, who swarmed in on foot and horseback from shore and valley and mountain for many miles around.

"Outside it was like an encampment; inside it was a sea of dusky faces. On one side was the King's pew, with scarlet hangings; the royal family always distinguishing themselves by coming in very late, with the loudest of squeaking shoes. The more the shoes squeaked the better was the wearer pleased, and often a man, after walking noisily in, would sit down and pass his shoes through the window for his wife to wear in, thus doubling the family glory. Non-musical shoes were hardly salable.

"One of my earliest and most vivid recollections is of moving into 'Stone House,' which was built of coral and stood at the foot of 'Punch Bowl,' an extinct crater, from the summit of which a royal battery of fifteen sixty-pounders often fired national salutes, which were answered by ships of war in the harbour below, making the windows and dishes rattle. Although the guns were all pointed in the air and could not by any possibility hurt anybody but the careless artillerymen, I thought the place impregnable. As a matter of fact, a couple of pirates could have captured the whole affair, for the garrison slept all night, and a half-dozen resolute midnight cats might have scared them into instantaneous surrender.

"One of our great delights here was that we had plenty of white pine for making miniature ships, which we sailed in the salt ponds and in the quiet waters within the reef, and for sawing into blocks to represent soldiers, wherewith my brother Will and I had many a pitched battle in the garret. Our heroes were those of the Mexican war—just over—and we fired our powder and shot out of little leaden cannon. The necessity of earning our pocket money kept us on the lookout for profitable chances, but our fun was none the less joyful because we had to work for it.

"Our herd of cattle, twelve in number, were quartered at night in the cow-pen in the back yard, the sucking calves being penned by themselves. Will, Baxter and I did the milking, for which father roused us every morning. There was no bringing up of calves by hand; we had not even a barn; the herd was driven to the mountains and watched all day by a Kanaka cowboy, who slept most of the time, and then were driven in at sundown, half wild and altogether unwilling to be milked. We did not get much milk per cow, and

spent a good deal of time in fierce combat with the calves. This did not meet the views of our American-bred parents, who gave us a series of alarming facts in regard to New England cows and the boys who milked them —abnormal boys who 'loved work.' I may say, indeed, that we were brought up on New England boys, and I can well remember the interest with which we watched the first importation into Honolulu of these marvels, and our delight when we discovered that they were even lazier than we were—that not one of them liked to get up early or preferred toil to play. Inspiration from that quarter, by which we had been so often shamed into laborious days, was thenceforth 'played out.' In the general mission cow-pen, much larger than ours, I used to think that I could tell to whom the cows belonged by their resemblance to their owners; in a few cases I was sure of this. We had no stables, and out in the wild pasture had to catch with the lasso every horse we rode; and everybody rode—men, women and children; the latter sometimes, as in our case, beginning humbly on calves and donkeys. The natives were passionately fond of riding, and would walk a mile to catch a horse to ride half a mile. The women bestrode horses like men, but with long scarfs of brilliant calico draping either leg and streaming behind them in the breeze. Saturday was their gala day, and the streets were filled with gay cavalcades of happy Hawaiians. We played baseball, but not in the American fashion; and 'I spy' was a favorite game, especially when we could play it in the graveyard. Nothing, however, was more permanently popular than swimming in the great deep mountain-basins, of which Kapena Falls answered our purpose best. The great feat was to jump from the cliff, some forty feet, into the depths below, where we played like fishes. A

FAMILY GROUP– SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG AT THE AGE OF 18

horseback tour round the island of Oahu was a great lark, with the races on the long, lovely sea-beach and the nights at Kaneohe, Kualoa and Waialua.

"My brother Baxter's cattle-ranch at Waimanalo was a favorite and beautiful resort; it was a little kingdom by the sea, bounded by the ocean and mountains. It was exciting to jump into a cattle-pen with a lasso and catch a young steer by the horns, while another lassoed his hind leg and a third pulled him over and branded him. In a few moments he was released, and then a race for the fence ensued to keep out of the way of his fury. Though we did this dozens of times, I do not think that any one of us was ever hurt."

The boy kept a journal of his vacations from his twelfth to his eighteenth year, and from these a few extracts follow, written when he was twelve years of age, while taking a school-inspecting trip with his father.

"July 15, 1851. Left for Kau in a canoe. We went to Kealea and had a short meeting and then went on to Kaohe, where we slept. In the morning we had a look about the country; it was very green. The house where we slept was an excellent native house; it was clean and neat.

"July 16th. Father examined some schools. A great many canoes came in. In the afternoon we started in the canoe for Kapua; we arrived a little before sunset. This place is very rocky. They have some goats here.

"July 17th. About three o'clock in the morning we started for Kau on foot. Father was sick, and so he rode an ox; it was very lazy indeed. Our road was rocky, especially the first part. During the latter

part we went through large groves of trees. After a walk of about five and a half hours we arrived at a native house, where we had a little rest and then started on. The road was good and the walk was pleasant, only we were rather tired. There were several small grass houses along the road for people to sleep in who went on the road. When we got to the borders of Kau, father lay down and I and two native boys went ahead. We had gone some way when we met the horses. I took one and went on. I got to Kau about five o'clock. The rest of the company got there at six. Kau is a very green place. We have grapevines, figs, sugar-cane, potatoes, and many nice fruits.

"July 22d. The native schools were examined. They study principally reading and arithmetic. In the afternoon we went up on the hill to slide. We had bananas to slide on. We would balance ourselves and then shoot down the hill like race-horses.

"July 24th. We had goat for dinner.

"July 25th. We had some presents from the natives of fish, kalo * and other things. We had some fun in the evening running races.

"July 27th. Started for the volcano on horseback.

"July 28th. The smoke of the volcano soon began to appear; also Mauna Loa. After we had gone several miles we came to the *pahoehoe*, which is lava. We could distinguish the road for some way, but at last it got lost. A native came up and asked to be our guide. He took us away down in the woods and then up again. After a while we came in sight of the volcano; it looked awful. We went on to the house and slept.

"July 30th. We went down about noon and visited the volcano. There was not any fire. We got some strawberries."

* Equivalent of taro.

It was a childhood of almost ideal advantage for any man, but especially for Armstrong, in whose after-life time for recuperation and enjoyment was more than usually limited. It gave him a delight in Nature, in the simple pleasures of life, and in bodily exercise that kept the balance of his mind true when circumstances impelled him toward one-sided activity. He never forgot the fun of being a boy—never, in fact, quite got over being a boy.

He watched in a respectful, interested way the drama of native life going on about him.

"The high chiefs—John Young, Kanaina, Paki, Governor Kekuanaua and others, with their fat wives—were majestic creatures, towering above the common people and foreigners, but 'the mighty have fallen,' and when Queen Emma and Mrs. Bishop died the line became extinct. I remember the royal soirées at the palace, when the gorgeous uniforms and noble bearing of these chiefs threw foreign diplomats and naval officers into the shade. We mission children would join the throng that rallied around there (the old palace) when the chiefs stalked majestically around in their regimentals—grander men than they make in these days—and soldiers stood around in imposing array holding old flint-lock muskets as harmless as pop-guns, while the band played; royal fat females paddled from room to room, the embodiment of serene dignity. How we boys did not dare go inside, but looked in at the awful ceremony of presentation and wondered why people didn't sometimes fall down dead in awe of the royal presence! But the supreme moment

was to come. The banquet hall opened and in marched kings and queens and nobles and dignitaries; the famished boys did not dare intrude, but their turn came by and by. Father got on capitally with this native aristocracy; they always expected a good time when he appeared, and in spite of his occasional severity they truly loved him."

Most of his acquaintance with the rank and file of the natives was gained on riding trips taken alone or with his father among them, when, in the absence of hotels or hired lodgings, he slept night after night in the native huts.

"The natives were all kindness to friends and to those who trusted them," he writes. "Father used to tell us of a walk of twenty miles which he took through a waterless district, when, distressed and faint with thirst, he came upon a watermelon in the road. After some hesitation he ate it, and at his journey's end met a native who asked if he had found it and told him he left it there for him. He always gave his purse to his guide and never lost anything.

"Often have we boys halted our horses before their thatched houses and been greeted with, 'Where are you from?' After the reply, the universal formula was, without regard to time or distance, 'Mama oukou!' (You have come swiftly.) Next the question, 'Are you hungry?' to which there was but one answer, 'Very hungry.' Then a stampede of the household and neighborhood in pursuit of some fish, pigs, poultry and vegetables, cooked underground on hot stones, but the food was always eaten cold. After dismounting, we would lie on our backs on the mats and father's

old retainers would 'lomi-lomi' the fatigue all out of us, for these people have, it is claimed, the most perfect massage or movement-cure known. It is part of their hospitality, and it is delicious."

This close familiarity with the natives at their homes and in their daily lives gave him an opportunity to learn the characteristics of a childish race, weak, yet capable of development under wise leadership.

To know a race intimately and accurately does not imply a desire to help it. The young Southerner is reared in close association with the Negro; the plainsman knows the Indian; but Armstrong absorbed from the atmosphere about him an attitude of protection and helpfulness toward the weaker race. The conversation of his elders and the daily work and effort of those whom he most respected taught him that it is not enough to alone understand, but that to understand in order to pity and to serve is the proper attitude of a Christian. The missionary fathers, like the slaveholders, practically regarded the Hawaiians as of a type inferior to themselves so far as mental and moral fiber was concerned; but no missionary ever lost the point of view that the soul of each of these people was equal in the sight of the Almighty to his own, and though individuals may often have failed in discretion and wisdom, the missionaries as a whole never forgot the thought, the mainspring of their work, that to build up and strengthen a human soul is the most

important work that a man can do. To his early absorption of this idea may undoubtedly be ascribed Armstrong's later unquestioning dedication of his powers to philanthropic work.

. . . . . .

Samuel Armstrong received his early education at the "Royal School" at Punahou, founded in 1840 for the training of the young chiefs. Some of these dark-skinned youth, among them Kalakaua and his sister Liliuokalani, or "Lydia" as she was familiarly called, who later became king and queen, were his playmates; but the Hawaiians, scant offspring of a declining race, were soon outnumbered by the sturdy mission children who were admitted to the school, and in time the Hawaiians disappeared from it altogether.

The "Royal School" was presided over by the brothers Edward and George Beckwith, who succeeded in inspiring their scholars with a real interest in study. Armstrong wrote of it in later years:

"I have never since seen or heard of such a school as this became. Every boy and girl seemed inspired to learn, and we played as hard as we studied. Our teachers led us up the hill of science. There was a moral atmosphere, a Christian influence in the school which permanently affected the lives of most of the pupils. I regard it as the ideal school of all I have ever known for the perfect balance of its mental and moral inspiration. Under Mr. George Beckwith, a pupil of Doctor Samuel Taylor, of Andover, and a

remarkably fine classical scholar, we plunged into the mysteries of Latin and Greek."

Some manual labor was required of all the pupils.

"More distinct is my recollection of our manual-labor drill—I did not then have it on the brain. How, required to hoe our patches in severalty of melons or corn or summer squash till we could count seven stars, we studied the heavens as I have never since done, not daring to shirk, for Mr. Rice, the farmer, was an embodiment of firm, kindly discipline that I have never forgotten. He hit us hard sometimes, when delinquent, but was always fair. How I hated work then, impatiently digging up the melon seeds to see if they had started!"

That he took a genuine pleasure in school work is shown by the following extracts from the vacation journals. A boy who names his sail-boat and his horse after the heroes of his text-books, and studies his Latin grammar before breakfast in vacation, has no half-hearted interest in his studies.

"Hilo, Hawaii.

"November 27, 1857. Friday. This A.M. I finished my review of the Greek grammar to Section 133; burrowed round among Doctor Coan's books to find some classical authors. It was very rainy all day and favorable to study. Delved into Telemaque as yesterday and read two books. . . . Made a topmast and squaresail spar for the *Telemachus* preparatory to to-morrow's sailing. The evening closed early, and I read aloud in 'Peter Parley's Recollections of a Lifetime' most of

the evening. Read C——* to sleep from 'Blair's Rhetoric.'

"Saturday, November 28th. Commenced this morning a review of the syntax in Andrews and Stoddard's Latin grammar; completed three pages and intended

*A delicate sister.

Note.—While he was studying at Oahu College events occurred which perhaps furnished the first practical test of his powers. He was called on to take charge of a geometry class whose regular teacher, one of the principals, had been obliged to give it up for a time. This incident is described by one of the pupils thus: "It required no little tact for an undergraduate to take charge of a class under such circumstances. But Armstrong seemed equal to any emergency. On the playground he was the leading spirit in all athletic exercises, and was the undisputed champion in the game of wicket, in which his side seemed always victorious.

"On taking the class in geometry, from the very first he began to inspire us with some of his own enthusiasm. Coming in from a hotly contested game of wicket, he looked every inch a man. He would deliberately close his own book and lay it one side, seldom referring to it during the hour of recitation. It was thus easy for him to persuade us to follow his example in this particular. Our memories were trained to do admirable service, so that at the end of the year the majority, if not all, of the class could repeat the entire seven books, except the demonstration and mathematical calculations, from beginning to end, or give any axiom, any definition or proposition by its appropriate book and number.

"In the demonstrations on the blackboard a very different course was pursued. The figures were often purposely changed from the form given in the book. Numerals were usually substituted for the letters, and every effort was made to make the demonstration as much as possible a training of the reason with as little of memorising as could be. We were stimulated to study up other demonstrations, and sometimes he would set the example by giving us the result of his own study of other text-books. In this way we were trained to self-

to make a furious onset at the same thing after breakfast.

"After breakfast we talked or gossiped. They, H—— and D——, called, and soon after that we had a splendid bath in the Wailuku, which is now

reliant habits of study, which I have found the greatest service in all my subsequent mathematical work.

"It was remarkable how much hard work he got out of his class. But in this, as in everything else, he always led others by his example. I have been under the instruction of various teachers in the higher mathematics; some of them were finer scholars than Armstrong, but I have yet to know the man who could inspire an entire class with his own spirit and purpose as he did. There was something in his personality far more influential than mere learning or scholarship, and I can never cease to look back to the work done under him as among the most valuable to me of my whole life.

"With the end of the school year came the public examination. The books were, as usual, laid aside, and with a method and precision almost military the class was put through its drill. Every one was delighted with the bearing of the teacher and the readiness of the class. At length, by way of variety, Edward Wilcox was told to demonstrate a certain theorem in Book First. After drawing the figures, he was requested to change the order of the numerals to be used in the demonstration. Then, after a few moments given him to fix the figures thus renumbered in his memory, he was ordered to turn his back on the board and proceed with the demonstration from the figures thus pictured in his mind. This was done in such a ready and prompt manner as to excite the surprise of one of the examining committee, who, not appreciating the true object of this unusual display of intellectual gymnastics, interrupted him with the repeated request, 'Look at your figures, young man.' Armstrong then explained to the rather puzzled examiner the nature of the test to which he was putting his pupil, who was now permitted to finish his task, to the great interest of all present. The superior work done by the teacher and his class was highly appreciated by the committee, and will never be forgotten by those who had the good fortune to belong to the class."—Joseph S. Emerson, in *The Outlook*, Oct. 21, 1893.

high. Only D—— and I ventured to cross the main current. H——'s wife didn't want him to try it.

"June 11th. We finished up our Virgil yesterday and have now on hand the Anabasis and Cicero. We commenced the Manilian Law yesterday—it's rather tough. After lunch I saddled my little mare and went to Hamakua-poko to find my horse Draco. I scoured the country and saw about every horse in Hamakua, but after riding some twelve or thirteen miles came back without him, but found the cow down near Maliko with no rope on; the scamps had stolen it. Reaching home, I found that the horse had been on hand all the time and was with the others."

He remained at the Punahou School till the year 1860, first as a small boy rebellious against hoeing his patch of corn, then as a youth with increasing social interests and increasing ambitions, and finally as a collegian; for in 1855 the school was renamed Oahu College, and became an institution for higher learning. Here as one of a class of four he took the first two years of a college course, which prepared him to later enter the Junior class at Williams College in 1860.

The following extracts from the vacation journal show that he was not permitted to fall into a way of life where his head did all the work:

"Saturday, January 9, 1857. After breakfast, father decided to build a house for Akio (the Chinese man-servant), and I went to work to collect materials. Got 3 x 4 scantling from Castle's for plates; procured the rest, tie-beams, rafters, floor-joists, clapboards, shingles,

etc., at Lewer's. Scantling now cost 3½ cents per foot, shingles $8 per thousand, clapboards (spruce), 6 feet, $9 per hundred, which is very reasonable. After drawing the lumber with Boki (the horse) and Akio, I took to H—— a copy of the 'Anonymous' which I had borrowed. We had singing-school in the evening.

"Monday, January 11. This morning I got up early and tinkered away at a new gate for the upper lot. I finished it by ten o'clock.

"Tuesday, January 12th. This morning I rose early and bathed. After breakfast I overhauled the wire fence lot, straightened the wires and braced the posts. This dirty job took me till 2:30 P.M., when I went home and devoured something, and then collected my thoughts as I could and considered my address."

The question of pocket money still occupied the missionary children, and many were the ways they adopted of earning it.

"One of the ways of earning pocket money as we got older was to get an appointment as assessor of taxes in some country district during the summer vacation. Six weeks of hard work would bring in fifty dollars. It was not play, especially when it came to counting the dogs, which, being a luxury and a nuisance, were taxed at a dollar a head. The burning question of Hawaiian politics was the dog tax; any man who would pledge himself to diminish it was sure of his election to the Hawaiian legislature. Torrents of eloquence were poured out on this subject, and one country member, Ukeke, nearly gained immortality by a bill to abolish the tax on good dogs and tax only bad ones, but the revenue tax was necessary to support royalty and the state, and there was no escape. It goes without saying

that every subterfuge was resorted to by the owners, and I remember that my favorite method of detection was, with my escort, to gallop furiously up to the house and halt suddenly, making such a racket that the curs would bark and betray themselves in their hiding-places, inside calabashes, under the dresses of their squatting mistresses, and tied to distant trees. Then began pleading: 'Don't count that dog; we are going to eat him to-morrow!' 'That one is too little,' etc. It was tiresome work, but often very funny. Many of my contemporaries at the islands assisted in some such way in paying the expenses of their education, and it did none of us any harm. [Some] worked as surveyors, striking their lines through tropical jungles; others took positions as governors of guano islands 1,500 miles away in the remote Pacific seas, and with groups of natives under them loaded the clipper ships that ran down from San Francisco for freight."

To supplement his summer earnings he undertook in his twenty-first year the work of chief clerk to his father during the absence of the latter in the United States, in the year 1859–60.

"I was then," he says, "a sophomore at Oahu College, but the liberal salary and the prospect of independence tempted me, and for some months I worked hard, editing, book-keeping, superintending schools, etc., keeping up my studies by night and morning work and my strength by long gallops to and from the beautiful Manoa Valley."

It was perhaps for financial reasons also that he undertook the editing of the *Hae Hawaii*, a newspaper, written in the Hawaiian tongue, which

was read freely by the natives. "Often a group of natives could be seen," writes his brother, "in the heart of the wood, listening while one read aloud Sam's words of editorial wisdom." By means of this editorial work the young man gained some influence among the Hawaiians, and added to his store of experiences an acquaintance with wily white politicians.

"Sam is acquiring quite a reputation as an editor," wrote his father to the eldest daughter, away in California, "and even numbers His Majesty among his editorial corps. There have come in about 600 new subscribers since Sam took charge of the paper. The Queen spoke yesterday of the *Hae* as a very interesting paper; but having his college studies to attend to, Sam is rather overworked."

The years 1859 and 1860 passed in this busy fashion without radical change till September, 1860, when an event occurred which suddenly formulated his plans and stirred him into manhood.

"On a quiet Sunday morning . . . ," he writes, "I rode home from service to find a gathering of natives at the gate and my sister weeping at the door. Before she spoke I knew that father was dead."

A fortnight before, Richard Armstrong had been thrown from his horse and seriously injured, but heretofore his recovery had seemed probable.

It had been the father's dearest wish that his son

should go to Williams College in order that he might be under the influence of Doctor Mark Hopkins, its president, then regarded as the leading teacher of philosophy and morals in America. Samuel determined, therefore, to leave the islands at once, in order to enter, if possible, the Junior class of Williams College in time for the winter term; and toward the end of September he set sail for the United States, leaving his sorrowing family behind him—four sisters, mother and brother, in the old Stone House.

The voyage to America was accomplished without accident, though the ship encountered a terrible gale which blew it with perilous speed toward the coast. The gale was succeeded by a calm which detained the voyagers several days within sight of land. During this time, as Armstrong discreetly observes, "everybody but I did nothing but swear and smoke; I sighed for *poi* and my native land."

In later years, looking back over his youth, his mind passed over the pleasant social aspect of it—the jolly rides with his companions and the merry-makings—and turned to the inspiring beauty of Hawaiian scenery. He wrote in 1886 from a sick-bed to a group of young people then in Hawaii:

"The beauty and grandeur of Hawaiian scenery is a noble teacher. . . . It will make you better men and women if you will let it. Get all of it you can. Your special gaieties, parties and things are of no account whatever compared with the ministry of

mountain and sea. Listen to them. Approach and live with them all you can. Hear and heed these great silent teachers about you."

And again:

"You have the volcano to make you devout."

But now, naturally enough, it was of his friends, of the home behind him, and of his plans for the future that he thought. From this voyage dates the beginning of a series of letters to his mother and sisters which describe minutely his voyage, his college life, and his experiences in the army, written at first in the flowery style then fashionable, later with increasing brevity and force. In the first letters one can see the young man, half homesick, half glad to escape from the tears and mourning of Stone House, hardly conscious of his inexperience and certainly unabashed by it, intending heartily to return. To what he was going he knew not. His parents had both desired that he should be a minister, and in the absence of any other plan he held their wishes first; but there was in his heart a rollicking delight in life that did not draw him toward a theological seminary.

Caroline, the eldest sister of the Armstrong children, had married some time before this and was living at Sacramento, California. Toward her home he made his way. He describes his arrival in Sacramento as follows:

"As I walked up to the Railroad House in that new

city (new to me), I could almost have sung 'Home Again.' There I was taken charge of by a little squirming fellow that always went on a smart dog-trot, and held a dozen lamps in one hand, two carpet-bags and several keys in the other, and opened doors without laying anything down; that chap stowed me away in a little cell, where I felt like a dog shut up for chasing hens. In the morning I found my Sacramento home."

After a merry week with his sister he took ship for Panama and crossed the isthmus, where another vessel bound for New York awaited him. He wrote his mother, describing the short journey by rail as follows:

"At 4 P.M. we started over in the cars. The scenery was quite Hawaiian-like, and the luxuriant foliage was good for the eyes. Soon we stopped for another train, about an hour, and I managed to procure a lot of excellent sugar-cane, which was a delightful luxury to the girls and myself. It was now night, and the train thundered along, rousing the dogs in the little dirty hamlets we passed through, and the dark, oily-skinned savages would come with lights to their doors to see us and give us a salutatory yell as we passed along, while naked little imps would throw sticks at the cars. The thickets were enshrouded in darkness, and we could see the quiet Chagres River close by us through the openings in the chaparral. Anon we would dive into a gloomy gorge, and the scene on the whole was romantic, especially as the fire-flies were flashing from every dark bush and gleaming in every shade. I often think how little those at home fancied where I was during those moments. I like the strangeness and wildness of things.

"At about eight o'clock we stepped into a restaurant at Aspinwall to wait for the steamer to get up steam, and I strolled about, beset with entreaties to buy and eat or to purchase shell baskets; but I was inexorable. Soon we were on the *Ariel* and away on a smooth sea."

In two weeks he arrived at New York, a month after his departure from Hawaii. An elder brother, William N. Armstrong, had been settled in New York as a lawyer for several years, and to him the newcomer went at once. The two lived together for some days, and under the guidance of the elder the younger saw the sights of the town.

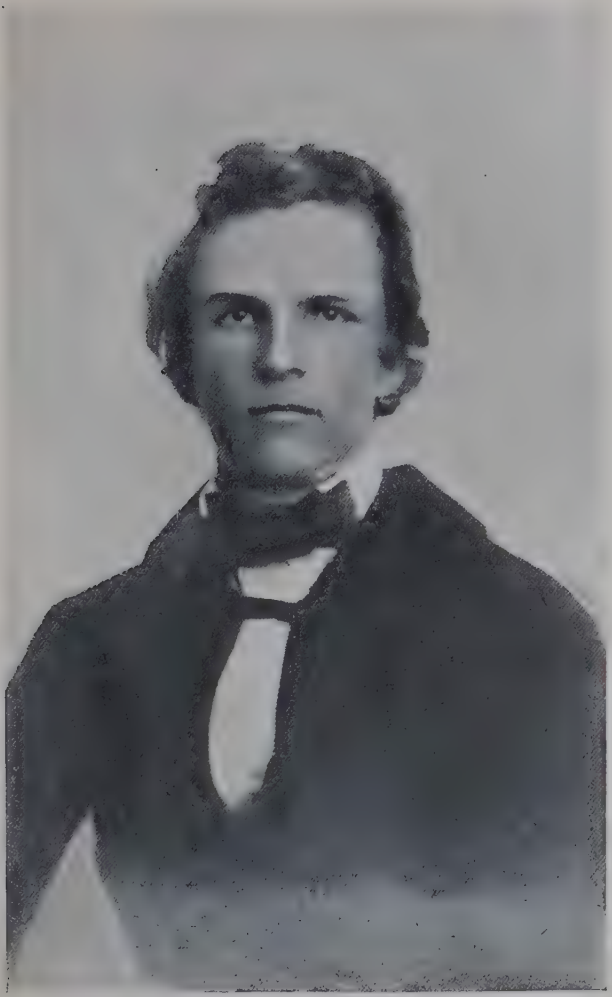
"It's Friday evening, November 30th, and I'm now in Will's room in 28 Union Square, *away uptown and away up in the fourth story* [sic !], and it's eleven o'clock. You may want to ask, as many do, 'How does New York seem?' It seems sure enough a great city. I am not disappointed either way. It gratified my curiosity to see the marble palaces and majestic buildings, but excites no feeling, no emotion. Nothing looks as if it had been very hard to construct. I only think how much these houses cost. Things are generally exaggerated; the crowds on the sidewalks are not so great, after all—one can cross the street a hundred times an hour without danger, even in Broadway. I make nothing of doing it; it only requires self-possession and quickness.

"In these crowds a fellow feels as he does in a wilderness, except that in the latter there is a certain solemnity and sacredness. In both one feels that no one is noticing him and he can do just as he likes. I'll tell you what did astonish me—it was Beecher's Thanks-

giving sermon—a splendid effort. His eloquence was matchless, his control over the audience wonderful. Beecher is equal to his fame.

"I also listened for half an hour or so to the opera of 'The Jewess' at the Academy of Music, and it was my first sight. I was and am a convert to the opera; such sylph-like grace in acting, such queenly beauty, rich, melodious voices, gorgeous robes, magnificent scenery; such a majestic bass as that of Carl Formes, and the delicious trilling and swells of Madame Anna Bishop were enough to inspire me with a flow of delightful sensations such as I never before have known. The music gave dignity and power to the language they uttered, and the story involved lent a charm to the music. The opera was grand! Quite different from the chorus of ten thousand wild he-goats that usher in the morning and raise their clarion-like matins on the crags of Waimanalo. Could you have stood by our side that evening as the full chorus burst out, or heard the voices of the Jewish maidens, you'd have felt healthier for a week.

"Well, it's past twelve; to-morrow I go to Barrington and Williamstown; the rest of our party are all at Barrington now."



SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG AT THE AGE OF 20

CHAPTER II

Williams College. 1860–1862

"It was, I think, in the winter of 1860, when I was rooming in East College at Williams, that into my introspective life Nature flung a sort of cataclysm of health named Sam Armstrong," wrote a friend and classmate many years after, "like other cyclones from the South Seas; a Sandwich Islander, son of a missionary. Until Miss Murfree wrote her 'Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains,' it would have been impossible to describe Armstrong's immediate personal effect. There was a quality in it that defied the ordinary English vocabulary. To use the eastern Tennessee dialect, which alone could do him justice, he was 'plumb survigrous.' To begin with, as Mark Twain might express it, he had been fortunate in the selection of his parents. The roots of his nature struck deep into the soil of two strong races. . . . Then, too, he was an islander; his constitution smacked of the seas. There was about him something of the high courage and jollity of the tar; he carried with him the vitalities of the ocean. Like all those South Sea Islanders, he had been brought up to the water; it had imparted to him a kind of mental as well as physical amphibiousness. It seemed natural for him to strike out in any element. But what impressed one most was his schooling. Not but that it was in unison with the man; it was, in fact, remarkably so; but it was so entirely out of the common—so free-handed and virile. His father had been minister

of public instruction at Hawaii. The son accompanied him on his official tours and had been let into the business. He could manage a boat in a storm, teach school, edit a newspaper, assist in carrying on a government, take up a mechanical industry at will, understand the natives, sympathize with missionaries, talk with profound theorists, recite well in Greek or mathematics, conduct an advanced class in geometry, and make no end of fun for little children. In short, he was a striking illustration of the Robinson Crusoe-like multiformity of function that grows up perforce under the necessities of a missionary station. New England energy, oceanic breeziness, missionary environment, disclosed themselves in him. Such was Armstrong as he came into my life, bringing his ozone with him.

"Armstrong gravitated to Williams College by social law; it was the resort for missionaries' sons; there was the haystack at which the missionary enterprise was started; it was a kind of sacred idol, a rendezvous for spiritual knights-errant, and Armstrong, though not very spiritual, was a knight-errant to the core. Like other missionaries' sons, he poked fun at the natives and entertained small circles with the ridiculous phases of missionary life; yet he was a kind of missionary in disguise, always ready to go out of his way for the purpose of slyly helping somebody up to a better moral or physical plane. His 'plumb survigrousness' gave him an eternal effervescence; in fact, his body was a kind of catapult for his mind; it was forever projecting his mental force in some direction so that he was continually carrying on intellectual 'high jinks'—going off into extravaganzas, throwing every subject into grotesque light; as a result, he was never serious, though always earnest. He took to Williams College as to a natural habitat; he lifted up

his 'plumb survigrous' voice and made intellectual pandemonium at the dinner table.

"He was a trifle above middle height, broad-shouldered, with large, well-poised head, forehead high and wide, deep-set flashing eyes, a long mane of light-brown hair, his face very brown and sailor-like. He bore his head high and carried about an air of insolent good health. He was unconventional in his notions, Shaksperean in sympathy, and wished to see all sides of life, yet he never formed affiliations with the bad side. If he touched pitch, he got rid of it as soon as he could —pleasantly if possible, but at all events decidedly; he had a robust habit of will, and laid hold always of the best in his environment.

"Intellectually he was a leader. Spiritually he was religious, with a deep reverence for his father's life and work. . . . Yet all felt him to be under great terrestrial headway. Sometimes he seemed to have little respect for the spiritual; he shocked people by his levity and irreverance. Yet there was about him at all times a profound reverence of spirit for God, manhood, womanhood, and all sacred realities. Indeed, with him reverence and religion alike were matters not of form, but of inward principle whose application he had not yet mastered. Other men were original in thought; he was original in character; but above all there was an immediacy of nature. His greatest tendency seemed to be to go ahead; he has, in fact, often reminded me of Harry Wadsworth, the hero of E. E. Hale's 'Ten Times One is Ten.' He was the most strenuous man I ever saw. Naturally he was a problem to us—what would he come to? Doctor Arnold said of himself: 'Aut Cæsar, aut nullus.' Armstrong said of himself: 'Missionary or pirate.' " *

*Dr. John Denison in *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1894.

The college world in which Armstrong found himself during the eighteen months of his stay in Williamstown was a different one from that of to-day. The years of conflict from 1861 to 1865 brought about a more radical divergence of student ideals and customs than the twenty between 1870 and 1890, for the war, breaking the barriers between East and West and North and South, introducing the resources of the country to the men who were able to handle them, enlarged the scope of college as of national life. This ante-bellum college world was a very little one, in which a kind of family life was possible; in it men met their social equals and few besides; the distinctions between rich and poor were not emphasized as now by luxurious apartments for the well-to-do and the plainest of dormitories or boarding-houses for the men who have to work their way. Less cosmopolitan, surely, the old way, but more companionable.

In such a setting individual characters stood clearly defined and single voices could be heard. More regard was given to the teacher than to the laboratory. Garfield's definition of a good college as "a log with Doctor Hopkins sitting on one end and a student on the other," was the standard of academic worth. So Armstrong was sent, not so much to Williams College, as to be under Doctor Hopkins, for Doctor Hopkins was the college.

Armstrong saw nothing of him, however, during

the first three months of his stay at Williamstown. His impressions at first were mainly of cold weather and social stiffness. When he first arrived the long winter vacation had begun, and in addition to the dreariness of ice and snow everywhere, the place seemed to him solemn and deserted. He chose a temporary lodging-place and settled himself to study and make what he could otherwise out of this place, more suited, he thought, to a New England anchorite than to a hot-blooded young fellow from the tropics. No swimming, no riding, no sailing, no flirting even; yet a man cannot study all the time! No wonder the scenery moved him to ridicule and the society to homesickness.

In a home letter written December 14, 1860, he says:

"Williamstown is shockingly lonely. It is, you know, the early part of the long winter vacation now. I suspect that they keep the girls tied up or that they stay abed all the while, it's so cold; I have seen but a few girls and only three or four squads of urchins sliding down hill. The girls sometimes slide, and they look really pretty as they kneel on the sled, catch the boys' shoulders and 'scoot' away like fairies.

"The mountains here are nothing more than Nature's warts, little stuck-up hills that you could cross in an hour on a donkey going backward faster than forward.

"Well, I'm in a very nice room, at a desk with a kerosene lamp, and a stove fire just behind me, about ten o'clock P.M.

"I showed my old lady yours and Ellen's drawings;

she thought that 'people can get educated there as well as here.' The floor is carpeted and the room is papered.

"The snow lies a foot deep—weather awfully cold; two below zero to-day. I'll tell you why to-day has been a very peculiar and strange one to me. First, I finished my Greek studies. I've read steadily some seven or nine hours every day for ten days (Sundays excepted) in Demosthenes—enough to have used me clean up at the islands, but I don't mind it at all here. I feel free, as the hardest is over. You see, the term was out a little after I arrived in New York, and I have to do in four or five weeks all the work of the last term and considerable of the previous in Sophomore year. The work is over and I breathe freely.

"Secondly, I had a letter from J—— [a sister]; she is doing well; letters, you know, are precious to the exile.

"Thirdly, I had my first sleigh ride! I hired a sleigh and invited a student to go with me; but I had to rub my ears to keep them from freezing—more work than fun.

"Fourthly, as I was reading the peroration of Demosthenes' Oration on the Crown, little George C—— brought me a letter in Will's handwriting. I opened it and was surprised to see the delicate handwriting inside. I wondered again, and just then saw 'Stone House,' and soon I knew it was from you, and with an intensity of interest that you haven't the remotest idea of I devoured its contents."

At last the 10th of January came and the term began. He moved from his room in the lodging-house to the college dormitory, whence he writes as follows:

"WILLIAMSTOWN, January 10, 1861.

"I have left Mrs. C——'s and room now in 13 East College. We are on the ground floor, and here is a plan of the room. The floor is carpeted plainly and the walls are papered; just behind the sociable hangs the 'Court of Death,' and other pictures hang around the room—one a most exquisite gem, 'Christ of the Cross'; it is small but rare. I'll get one and send it home if I can. We have cozy little bedrooms, about two-thirds as large as our spare room at home. My bedroom is nicely carpeted. I have a fine iron bedstead and good bedding. The large room was furnished when I came, so that I only had to fit up my bedroom, which I did at a cost of some $15, including a desk and a chair. Bedding is very expensive, and quantities are necessary in this weather. At six A. M. a bell rings; in about thirty minutes a fellow comes in and lights our fire (we sleep in a cold room all night), and when the second bell, at seven, rings I jump up, sponge all over with biting cold water—this makes me feel fine—dress and hurry off to breakfast at Hosford's, about half a mile distant, where I get board at $2 per week.

"At nine we attend prayers in the chapel. . . . After that Sam Alexander and I go to the gymnasium and have a 'set-to' with the boxing-gloves for exercise, and then I go to my room and study mechanics, which is a little tough, especially Jackson's Mechanics. At eleven we attend recitation in mechanics to Professor Albert Hopkins twenty or thirty minutes; then return to our rooms till twelve and then go to dinner; return at one P. M., always stopping at the post-office on the way, as we do also when we go to breakfast, and are too often disappointed. We then study our Latin, Tacitus, and recite to Professor Smith. After that we have evening prayers, always conducted by the president,

and from prayers march to supper. The evening is then before us, for study or otherwise. On Wednesday and Saturday P. M. there are no recitations.

"Our class numbers some fifty-two fellows and is a mixture of very fine and very poor students. Those with the best memories succeed the best generally, though not always; study and not thought seems to be the aim of college exercises. I'm now beginning to feel a little at home in Williamstown, but don't entirely like this cold weather. For a few days it was bitterly cold and I suffered a little, but it has now moderated and for a few days the climate has been most exhilarating. I never felt better in my life than I do now. The snow is very deep, deeper than for many years before, and when a thaw comes there will be awful slush.

"So now you know what I am about. I'd write you a longer letter if there was anything to write about; and, moreover, I haven't the time to write that I had in vacation."

In the following speaks the philosopher:

"Don't let your health suffer. Ellen writes me that you look 'careworn,' and I know you must be lonely; but there are 'living waters' to refresh us and sweet voices from a better land. . . . I hope the girls get a chance to ride horseback occasionally. I should be sorry to learn that you don't get your accustomed rides or that Major is either ill-behaved or lean. There is only one thing that will keep you up at home and that is *cheerfulness;* you must secure that at all events; if necessary, fill the house with cats from top to bottom, tie a dog to every lilac, and place monkeys in every tree; at any rate, keep cheerful. There is no use in melancholy, and there is a fascination in melancholy

which is dangerous—it is like the serpent's insidious charm; it wears the life away.

"I found it quite hard to study at first; the past would flash vividly over me and I could not apply my mind. I'm doing well now, however. I found a pleasure in reviewing those sad days of gloom, and found, too, that much of my retrospection did me no good—it was like a stimulant."

During the winter he had formed a pleasant acquaintance with a son* of the President and in March was invited to share his room in Doctor Hopkins's house. He gladly accepted this invitation, having conceived a strong admiration for his president.

"Doctor Hopkins," he said, "is a noble man in the highest sense of the word; I never saw his equal; he is essentially a man of power, and combines the highest traits of character."

So began a lifelong friendship with both the father and son.

His new situation in a home-life relieved the sense of loneliness which Armstrong had felt ever since coming to college and greatly broadened his social horizon; it was of no slight importance to him to see something of the ways of the cultivated New England people he met in the families of the President and the college professors. He began to broaden his student acquaintance, and made the

*Archibald Hopkins.

discovery that good clothes and presentable manners are valuable assets.

"When a man's history is not known, dress has a great deal to do with his position; when he is once thoroughly known, dress is a small matter. With two-thirds of the fellows in college style in dress is nothing, and as for them I could dress anyhow, but the other third care much about fashion and are yet smart, fine and polished fellows—their society gives a man polish. While in college I wish to be dressed as well as the best. I find it pleasanter to be received as an equal than to be looked upon as out of my place when I meet with the well-dressed of New York or even of Williamstown."

He joined no college society, saying:

"In college I belong to no secret society and must rely on my own merit for getting friends; when one joins a secret society all in it are his sworn friends, right or wrong; this is childish."

He keenly enjoyed this new-found social life, but it never made him forget the bereaved mother and sisters at home. He calls his pleasures to account for themselves in the form of some permanent good:

"It is hardly right for me to be so singularly blest and so gay while you are still bleeding from the direst wound that you ever felt. This means something—God has not done all this to me for nothing. I wonder what He would teach by this."

Meditating seriously upon the future, he writes at about the same time:

"WILLIAMSTOWN, March 30, 1861.

"Just now there is considerable religious interest in college, and I think I have become a better Christian than I used to be. I look forward with joy to a life of doing good, and if my native land should present the strongest claims to me I should be willing and glad to go there. My aim is to study for the ministry, but yet I hesitate to take the solemn vows—the responsibility is so awful. Besides, I may not have the means to study that profession or any other. If the plantation pays well I may be aided by that—in about a year from now this question will become a serious one. I believe the means will come from somewhere, and if they don't I'll begin to suspect that Providence doesn't design me for clerical duties. Baxter [his brother] used to say that none of our family would make good ministers; if he feels that about my choice, tell him that I mean to have good times after all and not to look like a galvanized mummy. Tell him to save me one of his finest colts—I may need it in about four years."

War excitement touched him in the spring vacation of 1861. April 20th he wrote from New York:

"It is no easy thing to compose oneself at this time. War is the only thing talked about, and almost the only thing done is getting up regiments and making uniforms, etc., for the soldiers. Thousands wear badges of one kind and another on their breast, indicating the allegiance to the flag. The infants in the nurses' arms hold in their tiny hands the Stars and

Stripes, and small boys stick little flags all over themselves; the drays and carts of all descriptions display the Union flag, and in every imaginable place the star-spangled banner is 'flung to the breeze.' The appearance of Broadway and Cortlandt Street is magnificent from the profusion of bunting hung out of the windows.

"The excitement is extraordinary; since the Seventh Regiment left, the New Yorkers have taken and will take the deepest interest in the war. The departure of the Seventh was a magnificent triumph; never did the Cæsars have such an ovation; handkerchiefs moistened with tears were waved at them—one great surge of applause rolled down Broadway and continued for hours. The regiment looked splendidly. Scarcely a lady of the higher circles of this city but has a friend there—some of them have many; there are lovers and brothers and bridegrooms in the regiment. It is awful to think of the amount of happiness that is staked upon the petted Seventh. Hundreds of the noblest hearts will bleed or brighten as those fellows fall or survive. No one doubts their courage."

He was present at the great patriotic meeting in Union Square, New York, where a quarter of a million of persons were gathered, and where Major Anderson's speech roused the people to white heat.

"I shall go to the war if I am needed, but not till then; were I an American, as I am a Hawaiian, I should be off in a hurry. Next term it will be hard to remain at Williamstown, and harder yet to study."

But ere long lack of money took him back to Williamstown. He continues:

"I might say here that I really got tired of New York City after being there nine days—one fact, however, is that I couldn't afford to visit the opera and theater; and I don't get any horseback rides—that is too bad, 'but I must grin and bear it'! I hope to get a swim in a month or two. In this miserable hole one can go into the stream only three months in the year! Not before the 4th of July."

The chary Berkshire spring passed and full summer came.

"But it is almost June and we are wearing our winter clothing and sit by fires. Many fellows, having burned up all their wood, are determined not to buy any more and so have to shiver through. Our stove has been taken down, and I have to wrap up to keep warm enough to study comfortably. It is the very meanest kind of weather—the worst spring that anybody ever knew here, and the farmers are almost discouraged.

"We see the sun now and then from week to week and everybody runs to see it when they get a chance. I can't stand many of these New England winters, and just now long for the trade winds, clear skies, mountains, the ocean, and a ride on horseback. A ride here costs fifty cents, but the nags are a sorry-looking set and can only trot, and the ladies as well as gentlemen do nothing but trot, with a few exceptions.

"I have begun to dig in the garden this term, and when it doesn't rain I get up before breakfast and spade up flower beds, etc. I have one large flower bed all to myself—but the rainstorms interfere sadly with this plan. I am having an easy time now. I study my lessons only about two and a half hours a day, and on Wednesday have only one recitation and on Saturday

none. But I study practical astronomy besides—that is, I go down to the observatory when it is clear and look at the stars. It takes up my evenings to a great extent, but I don't recite to any one. After this, till I graduate, I shall only have two recitations a day, except on Wednesdays and Saturdays, when there is only one."

An occasional word gives a glimpse of the opinions then prevalent concerning the course of the war.

"There is one feeling that you need not now be troubled with—that is, longing to come to the States. The Southerners are desperate now, and are bound to ruin northern commerce. Within three or four months from to-day, I suppose, the southern privateers will be hovering about the California coast and the packets to and from the islands will be in danger; and the steamers on their way to Panama and up this side will be liable to capture or a hard fight. Still, they are pretty formidable and can't be easily caught. The war will afford but little chance for a young lady here to get married, and those that stay here will most likely become spinsters.

"I haven't told you, I guess, that the students are all drilling in military maneuvers. Each class is formed into a company and drills once or twice a day—it's good fun. We sent to Governor Andrew for muskets, but he won't let us have any at present. There is nothing going on just now. Politics and war matters are progressing steadily, but let me assure you that you probably entirely misunderstand the state of things. The excitement is not nearly as intense as you imagine, and naturally so. The reason of this is, we keep up with events; every day we get the news, and so it comes in small driblets; we expect everything

before it happens and know it within a few hours after it has happened. You get the news in great masses—the news of six or eight weeks in one lump, and you think the world is coming to an end, imagine all kinds of horrible things, while we are entirely cool and calm. Now and then a big excitement comes up and lasts a day or so and dies out; there will be fighting soon, I guess and hope, but the South cannot conquer and the North can.

"I board now at Charityville, and we walk four miles a day in going to and from our meals. There are eighteen fellows there, comprising the smartest fellows in the Senior class, and we have high times. I never sat at a merrier table. The living is plain but neat. I pay $2 per week. I tell you all this is good *maoli*.* The summer term of Junior year here is the most luxurious in college; the best studies—or rather the most interesting—and having, as I do, such a splendid home and such kind friends, it almost seems as if I had nothing more to ask for. This is almost a 'Happy Valley' (yet I owe the barber for cutting my hair and can't pay him for a while yet; the bulldogs of poverty have just now got me foul)."

As the summer of 1861 approached, Armstrong began to feel the reaction from the winter of hard study and a stimulating climate, following as they did hard upon his taxing labors in Honolulu and the death of his father. He complained during the winter just passed of headache and fatigue, and, as soon as his engagements would permit, started with several other young Hawaiians on a walking trip to the Adirondacks.

* Exceedingly.

A series of letters sent home from this trip reveal Armstrong as the sportsman, a role he played with poor grace; one can see the quizzical eye with which he regards the deer and the fish as they evade his attempts to kill.

"I spent a week at Racket Lake, boarding with Madam W—— at the reduced fare of $2 per week for everything, lodging included. Time flew rather slowly sometimes, but there I read *Harper's Magazine* and 'Sam Slick,' and went fishing, too, now and then. It makes me feel riled, sarcastic, cruel and almost like crying when I think of those pesky fish. One afternoon I pulled a clumsy boat, containing a consumptive gentleman besides myself, the distance of twelve miles to and from a famous fishing-hole, and I caught two insignificant trout—one for every six miles. Another time, indeed twice, I fished for lake trout under a scorching sun some three hours, and caught—nothing! At times I felt furious; occasionally it seemed like a good joke, and now and then I would moralize as my neglected hook lay beneath the glassy waters. Did it indicate that suasion was not my forte? It certainly showed that fishing wasn't, and fishing is only an appeal to the highest faculties of fishes.

"I vainly endeavored to guess the secret cause of my bad luck, whether it was physical or metaphysical, whether it was fate or fortune that so blighted my hopes. I especially noticed that all who were with me shared in my misfortunes, and I really suspect that had I lived in the days of the blue laws, etc., I should have been burned for witchcraft or fishcraft. And now to all fishing I say a long farewell. It's of no use—none whatever—I can't do it; and my only con-

solation is that if a treacherous tempest shall ever consign me to fellowship with the finny and scaly tribes they will probably not injure one who never did them any harm. Henceforth there shall be no intercourse between me and fishes—the world is wide enough for us all.

"Twice I went 'floating' for deer; the first time I only heard a deer in the distance—the next time I saw one. I saw his flashing eyeballs afar off in the darkness. I took a nervous aim at the lustrous orbs, fired, and off he bounded, doubtless singing to himself that little ditty, 'A rig-a-jig-jig and away we go!'"

The opening of his Senior year in college found Samuel Armstrong again in Williamstown, eager to enter upon the interesting course of study presented. Although he had an intimate personal acquaintance with Doctor Hopkins, he had never yet come under his direct instruction. Now for nine hours weekly he sat beneath that great teacher. Mark Hopkins was equally a metaphysician and a moralist; he never let slip opportunities to enforce on his pupils the homely everyday applications of the great truths that they were apprehending; his philosophy has been called the "philosophy of common sense." Yet even more than a thinker and a doer he was a believer.

"None of the members of the class of 1862," wrote a classmate of Armstrong, "could ever forget the calm but earnest words in which he repudiated Hamilton's statement that 'faith is the organ by which we apprehend

what is beyond our knowledge.' Faith to him was the trust of the soul reposed in a person."*

In the class-room the air was electric with thought. Doctor Hopkins encouraged the free asking of questions and never hesitated to make a point by means of a good story. Armstrong "reveled in the class-room discussions," says Doctor Denison. "He bristled with arguments and swarmed with new ideas." The opportunities which he was having impressed him deeply.

"The coming year is fraught with responsibility and yet pleasure—it must tell heavily on our after lives; such opportunities never come twice; we are treated like and feel like men now, and must quit ourselves like men. Soon the greatest mind in New England will take and train us. All our study consists of reading; we hardly commit anything to memory.

"I'll tell you how I study my lessons. My chum takes up Hamilton's Metaphysics and reads it aloud. I take my arm-chair or the lounge and listen to him. In less than an hour he is through and I am ready for recitations—that is all the preparation I have, and we only recite twice a day."

In those days a good memory was not only desirable, but necessary, in order to pass the final college examinations. He writes, describing the customary test at the close of the Senior year:

"The examination was oral and public. Doctor Davis and all the professors were there, and some

*"Life of Mark Hopkins," by Dr. Franklin Carter.

others. We were called to the floor to answer questions, and for two days we sat eight hours per day on hard benches. It was severe work to endure all this and have the contents of the seventeen books in our heads at the same time."

Besides the opportunity to study under Doctor Hopkins's leadership, his Senior year brought new social pleasures. No elective system divided the classes, and with the constant companionship grew up a passionate loyalty to class and college. The Senior year was a "perfect festival" and Williams queen among colleges.

He joined and became president of a debating society, and took part in the discussions of another and became vice-president of a theological society.* More and more he grew to enjoy the quiet beauty of Williamstown, seated among the hills, with her elm-bordered streets and air of academic retirement. After his usual vacation visit to New York in the spring of 1862 he wrote:

"I do not hesitate to say that its [New York's] tendency is demoralising—lost as one is in the great throng, he feels like an atom, of no particular account, and loses by degrees that sense of responsibility to God which gives tone and character to life. I like New York exceedingly, but am afraid to make it my permanent home."

*Having for its aim the discussion of practical missionary work.

During this vacation and the one following he began to feel more keenly the excitement of war which was thrilling the country, and the spring of 1862 marked both the opening of his active career as a soldier and the close of the peaceful episode of Williamstown life.

Scarcely two years had elapsed since he had gone there, but already he had received many of the most forcible and permanent impressions of his life. "Whatever good teaching I have done has been Mark Hopkins teaching through me," he said in later years; and it was evident that the characteristic mental and moral attitude of the teacher was truly reflected in his pupil. Mark Hopkins had a strong influence in confirming the natural tendency of his mind toward a philosophical view of life, but no follower of that sturdy thinker ever allowed a barren philosophy to sap his interest in every-day affairs. His philosophy was rather of the sort that enabled him to bear discouragements with cheerfulness, to meet obstacles with unfailing resources, and to depend on no man's strength but his own in time of need.

Armstrong was indebted to Doctor Hopkins, too, for the development of a deep and genuine religious feeling. His boyish letters are tinged with a conventionally pious tone, but from this time on the references to spiritual and religious matters are more truly utterances of original thought and feeling: perhaps this change was due in part to the fact

that about the middle of his college course he definitely gave up his project of entering the ministry; under the influence of Doctor Hopkins's large and generous attitude toward life he became an honester, simpler man, more modest about his present attainment and more ambitious for the future.

CHAPTER III

Life in the Army. 1862–1865

Examinations were over and college honors assigned—to Armstrong the "Ethical Oration"; class-day was past, with its absorbing interests of dance and the supper, when "every man told faithfully whether he was engaged or in love," and the last farewells were spoken under the elms while the morning sun streamed down, finding every good fellow in "floods of tears." College life ended, he returned to New York to await whatever destiny had in store for him.

For weeks the military situation had been growing more serious. McClellan had met the Confederates in two battles—Fair Oaks on May 31st and Gaines's Mills on June 30th—and the Union Army had suffered severe defeats. But McClellan laid all disaster to insufficient support from headquarters, and demanded from Lincoln always more and more troops, intimating that if he had had a larger force these defeats would have been victories. Ready to give his generals every chance for success, Lincoln issued a call for troops. The country responded, "We are coming, Father Abraham,

three hundred thousand strong," and recruiting went forward briskly.

Armstrong still considered Hawaii as his fatherland and did not share the burning patriotism of the times; neither did he evince any special interest in the cause of the slave; though before long the constant presence of danger made him appreciate the need of the sustaining power of a moral principle and fostered in him both hatred of slavery and love of his adopted country—still the road to enlistment in the army was an easy one for him; his friends and classmates had already entered upon it, public opinion was urgent, and his own temperament inclined toward the soldier's life. He expected at first no more than a place in the ranks, but yielding to the representations of his friends, who assured him that few volunteer officers were well versed in tactics before enlisting and that educated men were much needed as officers, he decided to accept a commission. The first steps were soon taken. A hint from a classmate to the effect that he had a good chance of success in Troy, New York, determined him to go to that city, where a regiment was being raised to be commanded by Colonel Willard, a regular officer of high standing. In Troy, therefore, he built a shanty on one of the public squares and began, unknown as he was, to enlist men for a company of which he was to be captain. His methods were successful enough to enable him to complete the required quota before

his competitors, and he was sworn in as senior captain.

Thus the metamorphosis of collegian into soldier was accomplished. As he studied philosophy, so he studied tactics and soldiering, with the assistance of Colonel Willard, who interested himself in the young Hawaiian and gave him much advice in organizing and drilling his men. It was a thoroughly congenial life, which he described in a letter to his mother. Who cannot picture the writer in his soldier's clothes filled with the zest of living?

"Headquarters Rensselaer County Regiment,
"August 9, 1862.

"I am in sole charge of a regiment of men! The regiment is not yet completed by far, but I am officer of the day; the adjutant and colonel have left. It is nine o'clock P.M., and I am in command. I am Captain Armstrong; not yet commissioned, but hope to be when my company is filled up. I have now some fifty-odd men—eighty-three is the minimum. I am seated in the commander's tent; my chair rests on the ground; I write by the light of a lantern. I have on a sword and sash and military overcoat. The tents stretch across the field at a little distance and look beautiful. This is strange enough for me. I have secured my position by the fairest means. Such a life I never led before—how this recruiting business lets one into human nature—it is the best school I ever had.

"We put up a little wooden shanty on Washington Square, Troy. Had a large sign painted on canvas and stuck up; scattered our posters around and went to work recruiting men. We have met the very meanest

and the very best of men; some enlist for money and some for love of country. Sometimes men of means and of family come forward nobly and enter the ranks as privates.

"I have the most respectable company by far. I have several fellows of sound principle from the Sabbath-schools in this city, and intelligent, good men have heard of my company from some distance and come to join it. At this very moment (two o'clock Sunday morning) one of my men has been brought to camp from the city drunk, and is singing in the guard-house in the most comical manner.

"I shall soon have to go on the 'grand rounds' with a sergeant and two privates—*i.e.*, visit all the stations. I have just given out a new countersign.

"The night is a charming one; the moonlight is exquisite, and lies sweetly and softly on the Hudson River, on whose bank is our camp. I now feel quite wide awake, from being called several times to the stations where riotous fellows were trying to run the guards.

"We have been treated with great kindness, and I am perfectly satisfied with the real cordial interest which some of the citizens take in us and in me. There are some splendid men in the city—how that fellow in the guard-house is yelling! I have had no time to go into society at all, and shall not, since as soon as the regiment is filled we shall probably be ordered away to a camp of instruction.

"The recruiting service brings one in contact with human feelings—no outside is put on to the enlisting officer; mothers beg in tears for him to release their sons; fathers give their assent to their child's going, and with a trembling hand and dimmed eyes sign the boy's release. One father called it signing his son's

death-warrant. Then the Irish women come around and make themselves comical and pathetic by turns. I have lost sleep and flesh in this work, but it is only working off superfluous stuff. I am hearty as a buck; this life agrees with me. I have held numerous patriotic meetings in the country, at places often thirteen miles from Troy. At these meetings good speakers are present and we often succeed in getting men after the speeches. I seldom get back from these meetings till one o'clock in the morning.

"To-night our company holds two meetings. About half were from the Baptist and other Sunday-schools of Troy. They used to call it 'the Sunday-school Company' —boys whom their mothers wished me to take if they *must* go. The rest were another class, large country fellows, farmers from Pittstown and Albia and workmen from the Troy nail factory; a motley crowd of eighty, always infused with fun by the little city fellows, hardly bigger than their own knapsacks."

On August 30th came the word that the regiment was to start for the front. The departure was a dramatic one, with "pretty girls in squads" to say farewell to the soldiers, and shouts and tears from the people as the train moved away. In New York Armstrong was met by his brother, who marched with him and his regiment through the city, and who tells an incident of the day. The regiment had camped in City Hall Park for a rest. "While I sat conversing with him there one of his men came up and said: 'I say, Captain, where can I get a drink of water?' He at once started off to get water for him. I said: 'It seems to me that it is not

very good military discipline for the captain to be running around for water for his men.' He replied: 'The men must have water. I'm bound to see that they get it.' "

After leaving New York the regiment continued its inspiring progress, sailing through the North River, with rows of gaily dressed ladies on the banks waving handkerchiefs and flags, to the Eastern & Amboy Railroad, where they took a train to Philadelphia. Feted and fed gloriously there, they moved on to Baltimore.

"The rest of our journey lay through Maryland. But first, about our transportation. The regiment was closely packed in twenty-six cars, forty men in a car—not passenger cars, but *close boxes*, each containing three long, frail benches made of rough boards. We rode day and night, and, being packed like sheep, there was no lying down, except on the floor, which was thickly covered with coal dust and dirt.

"We finally reached Point of Rocks, the first place where we could at all realize the war; here, as at every other point we stopped at along the road, the men jumped from the cars in swarms and devoured every mouthful of bread or any other eatable the neighborhood could furnish and that money could procure. From Point of Rocks we rode to Harper's Ferry, and thence to Martinsburg, Virginia, which we reached September 2d, the most advanced point of the Federal lines and one which should be held only by the most experienced troops. Here we began camp life in earnest."

Martinsburg was a small town on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, about a day's march from Harper's Ferry toward the northwest. It was, as Armstrong says, an advanced post. The main body of the army had been withdrawn, after the bitter defeat at the second battle of Bull Run, to the fortifications about Washington, where a shift of commanders was made, Pope being replaced by McClellan, though a few regiments were scattered here and there throughout the State for protection and defense. Of these the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York was one. It was a trying situation for green troops, with alarms on every hand, their ears kept constantly alive by reports of the startling events which were taking place only a few miles to the north of them. Lee and Jackson, after thrilling Maryland with their daring, were penetrating into Pennsylvania and seemed to be threatening her very capital. When the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York arrived at Martinsburg the men thought that Jackson was close at their rear, though in reality it was not until a week later that Lee detached and sent him southward.

Thus Armstrong's entrance into military life was at an anxious time.

"My position taxed my capacities to the utmost. A captain has as much to do as—in fact, he is practically—the father of ninety children. Men in camp, sensible men, lose all their good judgment and almost their good sense; they become puerile, and come to the captain on

a multitude of silly, childish matters. A captain does not only his own, but all the thinking of the company. Well, we drilled at Martinsburg and ate and slept, etc., for a few days quietly, but soon there was a consciousness of peril; whole companies were sent out scouting and on picket duty. The whole 3,000 men there were alive and ready. One night, when I was officer of the day, I tested the efficiency of our guard when they knew the enemy were expected, and I ran the guard five times and seized six men's muskets, rendering them helpless. But I came very near being shot by one guard, and would have been, but he suspected who I was.

"At Martinsburg we considered ourselves as bagged; we were shut out from all communication with our friends, and Jackson was supposed to be in the rear. We lived among alarms. An old farmer came to water his horses near to where one of the pickets was standing —thirty hostile cavalry were reported in sight—the regiment was called to arms—there was mounting in hot haste and some cheeks grew pale. Three companies started off on double-quick after the old farmer and his horse. Having scoured the neighbourhood when it was morally certain from the cavalry scouts that no enemy was within ten miles, the companies returned—they took a new track and a report came that 1,000 of the enemy were upon us. We were ordered out again—a long rifle-pit was dug—some were almost wild and some were sick."

As Lee moved northward he found that he would be unable to live on the country as he had hoped, and began to consider how he should open a way through the Shenandoah Valley to his base of supplies.

The way was clear except for one post, Harper's Ferry, which was still held by Union troops, though by all the rules of war it should have abandoned because of its situation in a hostile country. To capture this solitary stronghold, therefore, Lee despatched Stonewall Jackson September 10th. Jackson's marches were rapid, and by night he was close on Harper's Ferry. All the troops available were thrown in to defend it, and among them the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York was despatched from Martinsburg. Armstrong thus describes the hasty reënforcement:

"One night, when deep sleep had fallen upon us, when after a day of wild reports we were just beginning to get refreshed most sweetly, an order came which threw us into the wildest confusion. We were to retreat instanter. Tents were struck—a thousand-and-one articles had to be picked up. Misunderstanding reigned among the commanders, and confusion prevailed throughout; such a wild bustle, such a thoroughly disagreeable affair I hope never again to participate in. There was, of course, yelling all the time. Well, finally the knapsacks were packed, the men fell into line, and away we marched at two o'clock A.M., September 11, 1862. The men were unused to walking and to carrying loads, and within four miles 300 knapsacks were thrown away. The retreat was a wearisome affair and hundreds sat down exhausted by the roadside, not caring what became of them. The men could not be kept in rank; every apple- or plum-tree on or near the road was plundered and every well or spring was drained by dense throngs of thirsty wretches. Order was

turned into disorder, and the regiment, along with others, moved like a herd of driven cattle. Companies scattered and left no nucleus; a few of us held the main body of our men together; and it was well, for when close upon Harper's Ferry information came that the rebels were in strong force in front, prepared to dispute our advance; only three companies could be brought to bear against them, and mine was one. That time the affair seemed serious, and all looked a little paler. Guns were loaded, all luggage thrown away, and then we stood still as death—a time in which a person thinks like lightning. But there proved to be no enemy, though in twelve hours there were 20,000 rebels where we stood. We marched from two A.M. till about five P.M., and less than 100—two skeleton companies—followed Colonel Willard into camp. My company was one of the two.

"Soon, however, the regiment straggled in, though about 100 men were captured, for the rebel cavalry pressed hard on our rear."

The story of the surrender of Harper's Ferry is well known. The garrison and reënforcements were cooped up in a basin between Loudoun, Bolivar and Maryland Heights, three towering hills which surround the junction of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers. No proper fortification of these heights had been made, and the Confederates soon captured them and then stood pouring shot, shell and even musket balls into the Union forces, so close were they to the helpless soldiery below.

"When the first shell struck," says Armstrong, "the scampering began. The Colonel ordered us off the

ground at once, and then there was an uproar and a confusion that baffles the imagination; the infantry, cavalry and artillery gathered up their arms and equipage and stampeded like wildfire. The regiment flew to where their arms were stacked, seized them and ran in wild disorder to the nearest ravine for shelter.

"I saw no signs of order, but in truth I thought of and cared for nothing but my company. By this time the shells from the new battery were falling all around us—their whizzing was terrific. I first rushed to the arms and summoned my men. I then halted them, formed them in two ranks, and had got a large number of them into position when the Colonel came by and ordered me away at once. I started them off and kept in the rear, bringing up and in the later comers, and my men marched off in a body for some distance till I got out of the way into a yard—still, however, exposed to the shell—halted them and re-formed them, waited for stragglers, put things into shape again, and then pushed into the road, which was crowded with flying men, artillery wagons, horses, and everything else.

"We kept together—I made them keep step—gave three cheers for Company D with a will, and marched down into the ravine and reported to my Colonel, who was trying to rearrange his scattered troops. Mine was about the only company that came off in good order. Captains, lieutenants and higher officers 'skedaddled' in a hurry. But there was no safe place in that exposed valley; only a dark cloud that overhung the battery-crowned heights around them the next morning (September 15th) prevented a slaughter; and later in the morning, when the mist cleared, the whole force stood helpless under a heavy artillery fire, which lasted two hours before surrender was effected. We took our men to a little ravine and hid them in a little gutter,

though they were by no means entirely concealed. I stood near the edge of the gutter with my first lieutenant, in full view and exposed to the enemy's fire. The shot fell first at a little distance, but soon they edged over toward us; our battery was all the while replying smartly. We were almost between the two and just in front of our own. My company was, I think, the most exposed of all; we were, at any rate, most nearly in range. By this time the firing had become general on every side. Some six batteries of Jackson's artillery were pouring shot and shell into our position, and the shrieking of the missiles as they flew was horrible. One eight-pound shot struck where I had been standing and bounded over me; another passed by me; and now we were assured that we were going to be cut up badly. With my men around me and being conscious of their gaze, I felt calm, and when the shot struck near me I didn't move a muscle, but when we moved to a place of much greater safety and I was sitting in the bushes I felt much more fear of the shells than before. I tell you it is dreadful to be a mark for artillery; bad enough for any, but especially for raw troops; it demoralizes them—it rouses one's courage to be able to fight in return, but to sit still and calmly be cut in two is too much to ask.

"Here we remained till a fresh battery was about to rake us through and through, when down went the Stars and Stripes."

So 12,500 men and much war material fell into the hands of the enemy. The prisoners of war were then marched directly across the field, subject to the continuous fire of a battery which had not yet heard the news of the surrender.

This march under fire, Armstrong said, scared him more than anything else.

"There we were on the hill, our arms stacked before us and waiting; soon the celebrated 'Stonewall' Jackson rode along our lines with his staff, attended also by our colonel and others. He rode a common-looking, cream-colored horse and was plainly dressed in citizen's clothes—a gray, dingy suit. He wore a hat which his men called his 'new hat,' though it was worn enough. The costumes of his attendants and whole army were dirty and torn, their beards unkempt, hats slouchy, muskets rusty, and they all looked as if a sirocco of red dust had blown over their gray uniforms. The mounted men rode well and looked like brave men.

"After a while we were marched to our former camping ground and assigned certain limits; to which, however, they did not restrict us. I went down and bathed in the Shenandoah River with Pat Carden, and on the way stopped and chatted a long time with a rebel captain, and, like all the rest, a gentleman.

"Not a syllable of exultation do we hear from them; and with good reason, perhaps—McClellan's guns had been roaring all day and a huge battle was waging some miles off [Antietam]; there might be a slip 'twixt cup and lip. The rebels deny themselves more than we do; Jackson's men devoured what rations our men had rejected; they also took all of our rations they could; they gnawed bones that lay around our camps; they often had for one day's meal but an ear of corn; and when in their march a man falls down from exhaustion he lies there—we pick them up. Hence the celerity of Jackson's movements. Before the last terrible fight at Manassas his whole force moved ninety miles in three days and at the end of the march went right into action.

The captain told me this. He says, too, that Jackson's soldiers never understood his movements, and don't care to; they 'know he is after the Yankees, will find the Yankees, and can whip them.'

"We were most civilly treated by the rebels, whom we found to be in truth 'bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh'; men like ourselves; only the rebels were not nearly as profane as our men—in fact, they used no profane language at all. They shamed us; they fought, they said, not for money, but for their homes, and wanted the war to cease.

"Our system of munificent bounties and fine clothing diverts us from the principle for which we are contending and few of us really know what we are fighting for. I felt the want of a clear apprehension of it in the hour of danger.

"The officers were allowed to carry off their side arms, and all private property was respected; few have been treated as we were. The day passed in pleasant and cordial intercourse with the 'secesh' army; we slept once more on the field, and next morning we were marching off Bolivar Heights to be passed into our own lines. Jackson was very anxious to get us off—in fact, so anxious that he galloped off the day before and left us with his generals. No paroles were signed by us; we were paroled as a regiment, and even that parole was left incomplete."

It was customary to place captured regiments on parole near their homes, but the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth was sent with some Illinois troops to Chicago.

When the plan to separate the men so widely from their homes became known, it caused much dissat-

isfaction, and was no doubt responsible for much of the insubordinate spirit shown on the march of one hundred and twenty-three miles to Annapolis, where they were to take the boat to Baltimore on the way to Chicago. It was an eventful time in national affairs, though monotonous and confused enough to the soldiers of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York. During these "laborious wanderings" the battle of Antietam was ended and was followed soon by the Emancipation Proclamation, though the news of this event, so fraught with meaning to Armstrong, did not reach the regiment till their arrival at Annapolis. The journal letter continues:

"The wanderings of Ulysses or of Æneas were more romantic, perhaps, but less laborious than ours.. The Scylla and Charybdis of hunger and disease had to be passed every day, for we had nothing to eat but maggoty bacon and hard bread, which Jackson had given us—the best he had—and 10,000 men with such rations, with almost no blankets or overcoats (they were thrown away on the march from Martinsburg to Harper's Ferry), dragging their weary lengths along, devouring green and ripe fruit, gulping down water at every well, and discouraged and demoralized by previous retreat and disaster, were fit victims for some malady.

"We marched five consecutive days. Of course, it wasn't all dulness. Sometimes our road would lie through a forest, and shade and cool breezes would delight us with relief from the dust which enveloped us. It was a tough job to keep our men in order, and in fact I had it all to do myself for my company; my

orderly took a short cut, my second lieutenant kept nosing around for something to eat, and my first lieutenant was just able to keep up, being a feeble man. Much of the time I was alone with the company, and all the time I had the work to do and did it as well as I could. At night I found the best places possible for them—gave their comfort the precedence. Sometimes I got them a good mess of hot coffee—and lost nothing by so doing. Such are just the times when men see the real animus of their officers; some captains, as soon as the regiment halted for the night, would scoot off with their officers to the best house they could find—and their men have cursed them for it and remembered it. To-day when, of the several thousand paroled troops here, only our regiment can be made to drill—the rest refusing point blank—my company is, they say, the most subordinate and dutiful in the 125th. I exact the same obedience that I always did, and it has been invariably given; not a man have I punished for mutinous conduct, and yet the most experienced captain of us to-day sent some forty men to jail for disobedience.

"My men *talk* like all the rest; they *think* they ought not and cannot be made to drill, but when ordered to 'fall in' not a man has refused as yet. I believe they are repaying my attention to them.*

"No promised land greeted our eyes as we approached the lousy encampment at Annapolis (Sunday P.M., September 22d); the thought of seeing the ocean had given me new vigor on the road thither, but we could not see it. We slept under the trees; next day built brush huts and lay in them, doing nothing but eat and sleep, till we fell in and marched a mile and a half to

* It must be remembered that this and all letters written by Armstrong during his army life were intended to be read by his mother and sisters only.

Annapolis—a den of rampant secessionists—took boat for Baltimore—two and a half hours on Chesapeake Bay—marched through Baltimore and saw some of the beauties of the 'Monumental City,' and took those everlasting box-and-bench cars for Chicago—forty men in each car; rations consisted of hard bread and partly cooked fat pork. We traveled slowly night and day. I slept nights on a board eighteen inches wide—a bench twenty-six inches high—my head resting on the legs of a noble fellow of the One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York Regiment whose ankle was sprained at the battle of Maryland Heights; we formed a strong attachment; such private soldiers would make an invincible army."

The One Hundred and Twenty-fifth was encamped at Camp Douglas, near the shores of Lake Michigan, where it remained from September 29th to November 21st. The time passed there was not altogether irksome to Armstrong. He saw much in the wide stretches of the lake to enjoy and to remind him of his sea-girt home, and found friends in Chicago and duties in camp to make the time pass quickly.

"Camp Douglas, 7 P.M., October, 1862.

"I'll tell you the scene. On the right wing a crowd of fellows are singing boisterously the 'Star-Spangled Banner'; on the center of the battalion there is a prayer meeting; just to the left of my tent they are singing 'Marching Along'; they have just sung 'There is rest for the weary.' It is wonderful how these Sabbath-school airs have such popularity and such a control over the feelings of strong men; there is nothing that the soldier likes so well as these simple, sweet melodies. The night is cold and the moonlight is lovely, extremely

so. [I have] a letter from mother and one from Ellen. Ellen mentioned her visit to Rana and Ulapalakua; these names waken memories that refresh me. And the 'church sewing society.' I suppose the tow-headed fellows who once only cared for the coffee-room and for all sorts of shindies in corners and out of doors now study their neckties faithfully, select their 'Mary Anns,' and go home with palpitating hearts—generally two of such hearts get together, some way or other. A 'hog hunt' in Hanalei—of course no hog, but the dogs and the horses and busy preparations—Sam A—— would generally bring some tall yellow dog that Ponto would cause to quake by showing his teeth just once—all this I'd like; the dashing gallop, the halt of the cavalcade, just to shoot a little 'kolea' a quarter of a mile off—the prior hunt to catch the unruly dogs, the stealthy advance of the hunter and final escape of the bird. Then a moonlight ride with the Punahou girls—three cheers for them—fine girls they are; will compare with any. Long live the omnibus and Harvey the driver, and all the animals that draw it!

"Here I am, a soldier and in a queer fix—how came I here? But my childhood's and also my manhood's home will always be a Mecca to my thoughts; they go back and travel from mountain top to distant horizon; they leap from island to island and from one mansion to another—I cannot follow them."

"November 10, 1862.

"I have just come from court, where we are trying an artillery first lieutenant. Our court is a terror to all the regiments and brigades here. We have power over life itself. We have good times in court, telling stories, eating apples, and smoking. They are trying to teach me to smoke and I take a whiff now and

then, but it don't go at all. I am not made for a smoker. I am kept constantly busy all the time.

"I am sick of the parole. I wish to be in the field. It galls me to think of my chum, Arch. Hopkins, in the advancing army and I here; but we may be relieved soon—shall be if Burnside makes a big stroke.

"I have a first-rate company of boys—they obey me better than I ever obeyed any one else."

At length the regiment was returned to Washington for further duty.

"MICHIGAN SOUTHERN RAILROAD,
"NOVEMBER 21, 1862.

"Chicago is about five miles in the rear. We are dashing over the prairie in elegant passenger cars. I am with my company, or a part of it—forty-eight of us in one car. It is nearly dark. I have just witnessed a glorious sunset on the prairie. I am writing by the dim light of a car kerosene lamp—the boys are all gay; there is a banjo a-going, entertaining us with some rampageous jig — others are singing the beautiful Sunday-school melody, 'We Shall Know Each Other There.' It is a scene that cannot be described—it is never the same for two successive minutes; a little while ago all hands were singing 'John Brown' with inspiring effect; now all are chattering like guinea-hens. We have stopped a moment for wood and water. The scene within is intensely human, and that outside intensely natural—divine; there is a long, narrow belt of red along the horizon; the heavens are beclouded.

"We are moving again and I can hardly write legibly. We are in for a four days' ride and are probably bound to Washington—whether to be sent into barracks or to Texas, with Hunter to South Carolina or with

Burnside to Richmond, we know not—this is a most uncertain life.

"This has been a day of breaking up and an awfully hard day for me, having no officers; one having resigned, the first lieutenant, and Tom S—— gone home on a furlough. I have lost from my company about sixteen by desertion; the regiment has lost about 300. After we were paroled the men had little conscience about desertion. It is almost impossible to keep a paroled regiment together.

"The boys are getting quieter as it grows dark and many are asleep, though it is no later than six o'clock; the evenings are very long; it is dark at about 5 P. M.

"My faithful servant, John Q——, sits by my side. I sometimes call him my 'Man Friday' or 'My Thief.' He is singularly devoted. He is a little Canadian Frenchman—talks the funniest English—has a wife and four children in Troy. I have detailed him from my company to wait upon me and nothing can equal his fidelity. He makes fires, does washing, blacks my boots, picks up my clothes when I throw them down, looks at every object he sees as created for my comfort, and if he thinks anything will contribute to that he takes it—hence I call him my thief. He is utterly indescribable. I can hardly look at him without laughing. Thinking that his sitting by me would interfere with my writing, he has been standing up and walking about the car for an hour. Such is my servant Q——; I have not told the half."

The regiment arrived at Washington November 25th, and for the next three months it wandered among the minor military stations of Virginia. Both officers and men were ignorant alike of the

meaning of their frequent changes of camp and of the events going on about them. They knew only the discomfort of cold and snow and night marches, and, on the other hand, the pleasures of camp-life, comrades round a camp-fire, the arrival of home letters, impromptu gaieties among the officers, and the never-failing charm of life under canvas.

The war dragged on during this most discouraging of winters. In the month of November the North had been cheered by the news of Union victories in the West; but McClellan, in command of the Army of the Potomac, still awaited that condition of entire readiness to which he looked for success. At length, wearied by waiting, the President removed McClellan and appointed Burnside to his command. Burnside, unable to resist the popular clamor for action at any cost, fought the disastrous battle of Fredericksburg on December 17th and after it lay fronting the foe, but unwilling and unable to join battle.

The One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York played a humble part in these larger movements; held as a reserve force for the Army of the Potomac, it was shifted here and there in conformity with its movements.

Armstrong thoroughly enjoyed this winter campaign. His health was excellent. "I do nothing but eat, sleep and study tactics," he wrote. Indeed, with no harassing home cares, in no immediate

danger of battle, and in a congenial position, with good pay, why should he not be happy? He expected to save most of his salary for the year and at the end of that time to retire from the army, if indeed the war was not over by that time.

But in spite of the easy-going camp life, this positive responsible experience in affairs was gradually maturing him. He wrote to his mother and sisters:

"I am sorry you felt so about my enlisting. No great advantage is gained without risk, and the service has so far been of the greatest advantage to me. It has been worth far more to me than so many months of college life. I have not found it demoralizing. I have gained rather than lost spiritually since I entered it.

"Ladies here visit the hospitals and *do* something for the needy; fashionable women do this because of the promptings of their better natures, not always for the popularity of the thing. Now at this time and distance I look back upon the few times I taught in the Kawaiahao Sunday-school with far greater satisfaction than upon my labours in the 'Foreign Church' Sunday-school. I should be glad to hear that *all* the family had begun to labor in the Kawaiahao Sunday-school, though in order to do it they did not attend the other. I hope the girls will imitate you in pursuing an earnest philanthropic policy worthy of their father. I never got one-quarter as much real good from English preaching as I did from teaching those native children.

"It is pleasant at the time to sit under good preaching and hard to give it up; but should the girls attend Fort Street church evenings—as father did—and Sunday mornings teach the Kanaka children, and on

the way home drop in at the hospital and just go from bed to bed and speak a word, or go out among the native houses back of our house, there they will find sick who will greatly need little comforts; old women are plenty around our neighborhood who are destitute—help such.

"This is my earnest advice from the field, before a wary, subtle and powerful enemy. No one in the wild scene around me—of men building huts and fires, some shouting and laughing or swearing, of snow falling in beautiful myriad flakes—no one, I say, would imagine that I am writing such counsel on this old box-cover. But I am in earnest. My position and its possibilities cause me to look at things seriously.

"If you find some are better sympathisers in your good work than others, just quietly have less to do with the latter and more with the former. Let them alone in *word* and in deed. Don't be discouraged if the devil takes a new tack to defeat his enemies by setting them at loggerheads. It will come out all right."

Regarding his own part in the great struggle there is a securer tone; he wrote the Christmas Eve before the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect:

"I learn to-night that Burnside and Seward have resigned. What to do as things now look I don't know—what am I fighting for? But the first day of January is at hand—possibly the greatest day in American history—when the sons of Africa shall be free. To wait until that day I am content, and then I shall know for what I am contending—for freedom and for the oppressed. I shall then be willing to go into the

fight, and you will feel less grieved if I fall for such a cause. You and I will then have occasion to congratulate ourselves that our family is represented in the greatest struggle of modern times for the most sacred principles.

"I tell you thinking men are more and more largely of the opinion that the Southern Confederacy is a fixed fact, and I am inclined to it, but I have none the less faith in the ultimate triumph of right. Possibly God will crown our arms with success after the 1st of January, for then we shall be fighting for a principle. I am curious to see what will turn up."

A letter written January 15th to a college friend strikes a vein of reflective philosophy which appears in his letters with increasing frequency and became in later life the dominating influence in his thoughts.

"I know it is dangerous to tell of one's deep purposes—the profoundest resolutions are so weak; but without sickness or mutilation I shall not hope to see my friends. So long as I am of the army I shall be in it, unless, like you, I am laid down by sickness, and there is no present prospect of that. I like the army and I am devoted, I trust, to our cause. Besides, a soldier's life is a constant life, and for that I am the more satisfied with it; we profess to be soldiers and are soldiers; how many of our other professions are realized in the same manner? I tell you, chum, civil life is more or less of a humbug—rather *more*. Christian men walk arm in arm with the devil, and are in thousands of cases—shall I say it?—hypocrites. Since I entered the army I have become more hilarious, more jocose than before, but I believe an honester man.

"We hold ourselves in readiness to fight, and if prepared to sacrifice life, how much more prepared to sacrifice things of smaller moment; our position keeps us in a generous, manly frame of mind.

"Well, chum, I'm rolling over lots of wild schemes in my head, and D. V. one of these days I'll strike out; I want you along. But mind—effort leads to success—there is a point where one ends and the other begins, and here lies the difference in men. One man will not do a thing until he shall see exactly where this point shall be; another cares not if between where effort stops and success commences there is a gulf, be it ever so wide. Such are the extremes; men are ranged all along between—I rather lean toward the latter extreme. Where the eye of sense sees no continuity, but labor and its results widely separate, a certain faith steps in and binds them together, and trusting to this faith some men will go forward as freely as if there were no break, no doubt, for just here is the place of doubt."

There were a few colored servants in the regiment, from whom he received his first impressions of the Negro race. He at first thought them "worse than Kanakas," but began presently to respect them in theory, if not in practice.

"Chum, I am a sort of abolitionist, but I haven't learned to love the Negro. I believe in universal freedom; I believe the whole world cannot buy a single soul. The Almighty has set, or rather limited, the price of one man, and until worlds can be paid for a single Negro I don't believe in selling or buying them. I go in, then, for freeing them more on account of their souls than their bodies, I assure you."

This mention of the Negro is the last for several months—indeed, until he took command of a regiment of colored soldiers in November of the following year.

During the month of February the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth was removed to Centreville, Virginia, where it remained in camp for three months. This was a period which fulfilled a young officer's dreams of delight and which Armstrong has described as follows:

"Summer reigns in Centreville—the place is lovely—windy and awfully dusty. Our camp looks gay. Along the line of privates' tents there are double rows of young cedar and pine trees which have been transplanted, and they create a cool shade for the men and make our camp really romantic. There are over six tall cedar trees around and overshadowing my tent, a bower of evergreens in front and two small tents in the rear, all connecting. I call it luxury. I like it. Camp life *is* gay, though there are interruptions, of course. I'll tell you my pleasures. One is visiting the pretty secesh girls in the neighborhood. I am on very good terms with many of them and we have lively times. Generally go out to see them (in fact, we only can) on Sunday afternoons. There are also many sensible people, but being young and foolish I incline to the aforesaid girls. Then it is pleasant to go out after dress parade and hear the brigade band play at 'retreat' (sundown)."

While in Centreville he was detailed to serve on one or more military courts-martial, a duty to

which he was often thereafter subject, and one which—though he calls it "too dreadful, too sickening"—yet carried with it a certain prestige as a recognition of an officer's judgment and standing.

But Centreville, lovely, dusty, windy Centreville, with its picnics and pretty girls, was an episode which came too quickly to a close. June 25th came the order that the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth was to break camp and join the famous Second Army Corps, then commanded by General Hancock at Gum Springs. This move brought Armstrong at once to the front of the stage of war.

While the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth had been encamped at Centreville the battle of Chancellorsville had been fought, not far away. This striking Confederate victory encouraged Lee in the belief that the time had come for an invasion of the North. Nothing could so effectively hamper the movements of Grant, who was hammering at the gates of Vicksburg, as the fact that some great Union city was in danger. So without loss of time Lee pushed northward into Pennsylvania, and after him followed Hooker with the Army of the Potomac, which he had successfully reorganized and which was eager for a fight. The One Hundred and Twenty-fifth marched rapidly to Gum Springs, and together with the rest of the Second Corps was hurried northward toward Gettysburg, where the whole army was gathering under General Meade.

The battle of Gettysburg, Armstrong's first trial of real warfare, is described at length in letters to his mother. It seems as if he craved to make clear to her the many and vivid impressions which thronged his brain after the battle was over. But the part played by any one man in a great battle runs like a single thread through the great fabric of the whole contest, and in order to be comprehended must be seen in relation to the whole.

On the morning of July 2, 1863, the Union and Confederate forces were drawn up in two curved confronting lines, separated by a distance varying from half a mile to two miles. The intervening space was broken by wooded areas and a brook or two, and bounded on the south by the hill of Round Top; on the north it was open toward the town of Gettysburg. The right wing of the Federal forces, stretching toward the northeast, embraced Cemetery Hill, near which, within the range both of its batteries and the Confederate guns of Seminary Ridge, the Second Corps made its first appearance on the battle-field.

On the afternoon of July 2d Lee advanced to the attack. He was met by the Third and Second Corps, which suffered severely but succeeded in repulsing him. Of this day Armstrong writes, after all is over:

"Battle-field near Gettysburg.

"The night before the battle we lay out in the woods,

five miles from Gettysburg. All was quiet, and as I was lying on my back in the open air, looking up into the sky through the tall and leafy oak trees, I wondered what would happen on the morrow. I knew I might at that hour on the night following be as inanimate as the sods under me and my soul have gone up to its last account. I felt no quaking, but an anxiety for my own future condition and for those who loved me on earth. I soon fell asleep and slept soundly.

"On the 2d of July we were drawn up between two batteries (one Confederate, one Union) and sustained a severe cannonade, lying on our faces in an orchard—that is, most of us. I preferred to take my chance standing and watching the fight and seeing the skirmishers and sharpshooters pick each other off. After some time, about 5 P. M., our brigade was marched off to the left center, formed into line and charged into a valley full of rebs who were sheltered by a dense growth of underbrush.

"As we advanced with fixed bayonets and began to fire, they yelled out from the trees, 'Don't fire on your own men!' We ceased firing, and the rebs who had so deceived us gave us 'Hail Columbia' and dropped some of our best men. Those fellows were the famous 'Louisiana Tigers'—but we rushed at them with fixed bayonets, drove them out of the brush and then plunged our fire into them as they ran. Many were within pistol shot, and the old spindle-legged, short-coat-tailed fellows fell headlong by the dozen; the bullets whistled by me by scores, but I didn't mind them, though all the while perfectly conscious of what might happen. Well, we peppered away at them and charged furiously and drove them like sheep. But we were ordered to fall back amid an enfilading fire from a rebel battery. We fell back and returned in

order to our old ground, losing many men from the rebel canister and grape.

"This was our first fight—my first; a long and great curiosity was satisfied. Men fell dead all around me. The sergeant who stands behind me when in line was killed, and heaps were wounded. In the charge after the rebs I was pleasantly, though perhaps dangerously, situated. I did not allow a man to get ahead of me."

By means of this charge the enemy was driven back and the regiment retired slightly. It had lost one-fifth of its men, but the opposing force—the 'Louisiana Tigers'—was completely shattered and lost its regimental existence. Out of 1,700 men it had lost 1,400.

The One Hundred and Twenty-fifth encamped for the night on Cemetery Hill. Here it lay preparing for the terrible work of the morrow, which culminated in the famous Pickett's charge. The letter continues:

"Next day I was sent to the line of skirmishers with my division (two companies). It was an ugly place—the two lines lay about 100 yards apart, rather less in some places, and the sharpshooters were butchering each other to no purpose whatever. Both were crouched down flat on their faces behind fences or in the grass, and away they popped all the morning, killing and wounding quite a number. I took position on the advanced line, lying down behind some rails; but I was often on my feet to give orders, and then I would always hear bullets whistle over and past me. Finally we were ordered to charge the rebel skirmishers. It was a foolish

order—a fatal one. I led that charge, if any one did, jumping to my feet and waving my sword for the men to follow, and rushing toward the sharpshooters, some of whom ran on our approach, while others waited to pick off a few of us. There were four captains in that charge; two were killed near me and one wounded. I escaped, though I was within fifty yards of the rebs. We drove them and took their line, but they rallied in great force and deliberately advanced. Then *it was hot.* The bullets flew like hail over my head and it was not safe lying down. Many were hit near me, and after nearly all our men had fallen back I ran back to the former line, which we held. The charge was unnecessary, but it was *ordered.*

"After this we ceased firing on both sides, and after a two hours' lull the heaviest cannonade of the war was opened, we lying between the two fires—not perfectly safe, for the shells often burst too soon and the fragments fell around us.

"The firing was tremendous. Nothing could have been more impressive or magnificent.

"Finally the rebels came out of the woods in three long lines several hundred yards apart, with glittering bayonets and battle-flags flying.* It was grand to see those masses coming up, and I trembled for our cause. I rushed to the skirmish line, saw our opportunity (I was then with the reserves), returned and assembled the reserves, and with the men and officers of the Eighth Ohio Volunteers hurried toward the flank of the rebel lines of battle and gave them fits. Then it was grand. I'll tell you my fix. I was exposed to the fire of our own artillery from the rear, from the rebel batteries in front, and from the musketry of their line of battle. Many around me were hit, but Providence

*Pickett's charge.

spared me, although I was in advance and, if anybody did, led that attack. Some officers skulked behind a house. I felt no fear, though I never forgot that any moment I might fall. The responsibility and the high duty assigned me sustained me, and it was wonderful that my own men didn't shoot me; they were so excited and were behind me.

"Well, we turned the rebel flank, and no wonder, for we did terrible execution; besides, our batteries and line of battle in front were mowing them down. This was too much for them. The first line broke and ran; the second came on, were served in the same way, and also broke and scattered; yet they were as brave as lions. Their dead lay close up to our line, and one of their colour-bearers fell over one of our Napoleon field-pieces. Hundreds got behind a house and laid down their arms. We captured ten stands of colors. Thus the rebs were served all along our line, and on the whole it was one of the severest fights of the war and a glorious success for us.*

*An account of the battle given in the Regimental History of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York says:

"Noticing a lull in the cannonading, Captain Armstrong looked around and saw the Confederate lines marching grandly down the slope toward our men. He immediately ordered the entire picket reserves and all whom he could muster—about seventy-five all told—to fall in and led them on the 'double quick' about three hundred yards down the Emmetsburg road to get at the enemy in flank. Finding a rail fence at right angle to their advancing line some sixty or seventy yards from their extreme left, he posted his men along the rail fence. They took position unflinchingly, and resting their rifles on the top of the fence, took deliberate aim and poured a murderous fire into the rebel flank comprising Pettigrew's men. The Confederate leader afterward confessed surprise that part of the Eighth Ohio had been given the credit for the flank fire which contributed efficiently to the result. But distinct record should go into general history of Captain Armstrong's brave and skilful action at that important point of the battle. . . . Of the five officers who served with Captain Armstrong in his brave action, he was the only survivor."

"But I cannot describe the battle-field—the dead—the wounded—the piteous groans and the prayers of agony that went up to Heaven all night and day. The usual expression is 'Oh, Lord!'—it can be heard on every side, and when one approaches they cry for water most piteously. Oh, how they beg to be carried away to a doctor. Their hands are either half open or clutching a cartridge or gun or ramrod; just as life left them death keeps them. I may here say to you that I have made what inward preparation I can for death. I keep a little volume of Psalms with me and strive to act the soldier of Christ.

"Don't be anxious for me. The God above does all things well. There are more battles to be fought and I must fight. My sensations in battle are not strange. I feel simply resolved to do my best, to lead my men, and to accept my fate like a man."

That night Lee's army stole away southward.

The battle of Gettysburg marks a crisis in Armstrong's military life and in the development of his character. Before Gettysburg he had already changed from an untried college student to a skilful disciplinarian with the power of obtaining obedience from his men at critical times; a soldier used to hardship: but the great battle revealed to him life in its deeper aspects. He faced death side by side with his men; he saw many dear to him die; he led two important charges where a high degree of courage and military skill were demanded, and he saw the greatest soldiers of his time maneuver their forces on a crucial field. This battle was the

supreme test of those qualities of determination and judgment, of the power to conceive and execute effective action and the mastery of self in personal danger, which had been born in him and which much of his life had tended to develop. He had learned his first lesson in the school of responsibility.

CHAPTER IV

Life in the Army—Continued

* "Loudoun Valley, Virginia,
"Nine miles from Harper's Ferry.

"I have been three weeks at a time without changing or taking off my clothes—sleeping just as I marched, and being so tired with long marches that when I had fixed my little shanty and got my supper I was glad enough to lie down and sleep in my clothes, with nothing over me and my boots or a canteen for a pillow. Many a time I have made a good meal off raw salt pork and 'hard tack' (army crackers); sometimes off less; generally, however, we have coffee three times a day. . . . We are now in a lovely, enchanting valley. It is a glorious day and the Sabbath day, too. The only quiet Sabbath for a month. There are millions of large, rich blackberries on the hillside, and the soldiers have bushels of them to eat. I stewed some for myself in a tin cup—the first stew I ever made, and it was good. . . .

"We don't know where Lee is now.

"I like this life much, its ups and downs, its lights and shadows, its storms and sunshines, its weariness and rest. (Just stopped to eat a quart of blackberries.) As I resume my pencil, orders come to be ready to march in an hour; so our lovely encampment will soon be desolate."

* Written about July 20, 1862.

SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG AS LIEUTENANT-COLONEL OF THE NINTH UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS

[Written a few days later.] "We moved along down the valley about five miles and have bivouacked on a beautiful slope covered with grass. Our little tent is of course over us, and I resume my writing, having eaten another quart of rich blackberries mashed up with sugar and water in my cup. The face of the country is covered with little shelter tents, and soldiers are as thick as bees as far as the eye can reach. This being in a large army is a singular thing. It makes one feel most insignificant."

The Army of the Potomac was not ostensibly on a berrying picnic, but chasing the swift Lee, who easily evaded its leisurely pursuit and was soon out of danger.

On July 27th, Armstrong, now promoted to the rank of major, left the field for the North, whither he was called on recruiting service. He was obliged to stay near New York on this nondescript duty, except for a trip to Alexandria, Virginia, on a steamship in command of 1,400 men—"deserters, conscripts, stragglers, and soldiers." But when the end of October came and with it the approach of winter, the time for every one to be at work, he felt that "the army is the place for a soldier," and applied for permission to rejoin his regiment in Virginia.

The change had been pleasant, but he had felt dissatisfied with his position and prospects. Several prominent citizens of New York had tried to raise in that State a colored regiment of

which he was to be colonel. At about this time he wrote to Archibald Hopkins:

"Here's to the heathen! Rather, here's to the Negro! I say Negro or anything to get out of this. There's the far West, and here am I, a vagabond, a loafer. There are loose, lazy contrabands and why not 'go in'? My internal machinery can brook this dreadful titter-fritteration of my time no longer. Now I'm not disappointed in love—there's no one to love! I go in for some variation in the old song of do-nothing. Time won't do it; the War Department won't do it, and if my dander rises sufficiently I'll do it—I will. Yes, let us strike out—strike out old forms of life and thought, and ring in something new for a change."

Owing to the opposition of the State authorities to the enlistment of colored men, the plan was never carried into execution and he returned to Virginia still a major, yet the idea of commanding black troops had taken firm hold of his mind, and the place of a major, a "fifth wheel where there is a colonel," as he wrote later, galled him. Some time in November he took examinations which entitled him to a colonelcy of colored troops. These examinations were made especially severe on account of the fact that only men of character, determination and education were wanted for the command of colored troops, and out of eighty-five who were examined at the same time but four passed. A lieutenant-colonelcy was soon offered him, which he accepted the more readily because, owing to the

prolonged absence of the colonel, the active organization and command of the regiment would fall at once into his hands.

At this time the question whether Negroes were enduring and patient under fire was considered an open one or answered vigorously in the negative. The War Department had been employing them since July, 1862, and they had shown capacity for daring, if not heroism, at Fort Wagner and Milliken's Bend; still an officer in undertaking their command risked to a considerable extent his military reputation. Moreover, the Confederate Congress had declared that commissioned officers commanding "Negroes or mulattoes in armies against the Confederates should be put to death for inciting servile insurrection or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the court"; or, in the popular wording of the decree, that "no quarter would be given to 'nigger' officers." But this fact did not disturb the morale of the troops; on the contrary, as Armstrong wrote later:

"Nothing was of more help to the newly established and not at all fashionable Negro service. In our weekly officers' meetings to study tactics and discuss the situation, fully anticipating such treatment, we agreed that our men must go into battle in good shape and must be made the most of. We told them what to expect."

Just before leaving his old regiment for the new command he wrote:

"Camp One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York
"Volunteer Infantry,
"Near Brandy Station, Virginia.

"*Dear Mother:* This is the last evening I shall ever perhaps spend with my noble old regiment, the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York. To-morrow I leave my brave old companions, my gallant Company D, my comrades for many months in pleasure and sorrow, in comfort and in suffering. It is hard to do this; very hard. As I write, a band is serenading the General, playing 'When this cruel war is over.' It is harder than leaving my classmates when I left college. You cannot imagine the beauty and the pleasure of the relation in which I now stand to this regiment.

"I write this in confidence. At first for months they hated me; my company hated me as they would Satan himself. It was because I was strict and paid no respect to their un-military and unmanly humors. But finally, especially after Gettysburg, all this changed. Men saw me go where death seemed almost certain and call upon them to follow and they did so. Men saw that I never flinched or failed in the longest march, that nothing swerved me from the line of my duty. And now I have the utmost confidence of almost every man in the regiment. I think many of my old company love me. I know it and I love them. They have said they would 'go to the devil' for me, and I know that they would never desert me in the hour of trial, no matter what dangers and terrors might be before them. And yet they are young, many of them but boys. Yes, between them and me there is almost a romantic attachment.

"I go into untried scenes, but with no fear to meet the future.

"The Negro troops have not yet entirely proved themselves good soldiers; but if the Negroes can be made to fight well, then is the question of their freedom settled.

"I tell you the present is the grandest time the world ever saw. The African race is before the world, unexpectedly to all, and all mankind are looking to see whether the African will show himself equal to the opportunity before him.

"And what is this opportunity? It is to demonstrate to the world that he is a *man*, that he has the highest elements of manhood, courage, perseverance, and honor; that he is not only worthy of freedom, but able to win it, so he has a chance. All men must respect heroism and military prowess—those possessing such qualities must and will be made free. They are too noble for slaves, and the nations will despise a country that attempts to enslave men who have saved her own constitution and independence.

"The star of Africa is rising, her millions now for the first time catching the glimpse of a glorious dawn. Auroral gleams are lighting up the horizon of their future, and their future in my opinion rests largely upon the success of the Negro troops in this war. Their honor and their glory will insure the freedom of their race; their dishonor will result in the disbanding of the troops and in universal contempt for the race. I gladly lend myself to the experiment—to this issue. It will yet be a grand thing to have been identified with this Negro movement."

About the middle of December came the order to join his new command, and Armstrong left at once for Benedict, Maryland, where he took charge of six companies of the Ninth Regiment United States

Colored Troops, then organizing with three other colored regiments in that place, the whole commanded by General William Birney.

"Benedict, Maryland,
" December 17, 1863.

"This is a horrible hole, a rendezvous for blockade runners, deserters, and such trash; good for nothing but oysters, without another redeeming trait.

"The place is unhealthy, and many are dying of measles and smallpox, etc., but I was never more contented. I have brought the regiment up so that we have completely whipped the Seventh Colored, which was raised several weeks before this. Our camp is really beautiful, dressed in evergreens, with handsome stockades and well-graded streets, and nobody says 'boo' to us. Our tails are up—the Seventh keep theirs down and 'acknowledge the corn.' I have a fine, an excellent set of officers; they are full of pride and spirit, bound to beat anything around. . . . I assure you it is gratifying, because the task has been laborious, difficult, and subjected me to a good many severe tests. I have got along better than I expected to.

"One of my captains was a lieutenant-colonel and is smart as steel.

"I tell you this service will get to be *the* thing. All are satisfied. The men are willing, learn very quickly, and the regiment runs twice as smoothly as a volunteer regiment.

"To-day is Sunday, but of course no preaching, no Sunday-school, but a day of leisure. To-day it has rained all day. After dinner two of my soldiers were buried. I saw the procession start, ordered my horse and followed it. It was a strange thing to see a man who had been born a slave and lived the life of a slave

under the lash like a dog carried to the grave with the Stars and Stripes shrouding his coffin, in a procession headed by a brass band playing a funeral dirge, escorted by a body of soldiers with arms reversed, and followed by a procession of comrades in the uniform of United States soldiers, under charge of three commissioned officers of the army. The procession reached the grave; the same funeral service that is read at the funeral of sovereigns was read at the grave of the slave-soldier, and three volleys of musketry were fired over his coffin.

"It was a most impressive comment upon the grandeur of the struggle in which we are engaged. We are fighting for humanity and freedom, the South for barbarism and slavery. Remember, that was the burial of a *private* soldier, the humblest man in the army, and the funeral of a Negro who, had it not been for the freedom we gave him, might have been beaten to death and tumbled into a pit.

"I have been visiting the hospitals to-day, where about 100 of my regiment are quartered. They seemed glad to see me.

"But I must tell you about Christmas. These Negroes are used to having grand times on that day, and so I determined to give them some sport."

It is interesting to note that Armstrong grasped thus early the importance of providing for and guiding the social instinct of the Negro. The competitive trials referred to in the next extract from the journal developed regimental pride, in which the Negroes were often lacking.

"We officers subscribed money freely and bought an ox, which we roasted whole for the regiment.

"The day's sports opened with trials of strength at rope-pulling, the victor always receiving a prize and always being greeted with vociferous cheers. After this they ran races for prizes, and there was some wonderful running. Then they had a greased pole to climb, with $5 on top of it, which afforded rare sport. Next was a chase after greased pigs which had all their hair cut off and had been well oiled. The captor was to have the pig provided he caught him by the tail. A lot of bags had been furnished for a sack-race, which passed off with great success.

"After dinner the two regiments were drawn up facing each other, about ten rods apart, and the champion runners contested twice for a $5 prize. Also there was a blindfold race. My regiment won all the prizes and had during the day three times as much sport as any other. The men said they never had such a Christmas before. The roast ox was eaten for supper. During the afternoon I had most of my officers get horses. Some got horses, some got colts, some got mules, and I drilled the squad on the parade ground, also ran races and cut up generally: had a high old time.

"I feel more in my element since being a mounted officer. I have got along finely with my regiment. Have the finest camp in the brigade, and the Ninth is acknowledged to lead the rest. The regiment next to us had six weeks the start of us, and to-day they are not over one week ahead of us in drill and far behind us in everything else. We expect to beat everything around in everything, and we are in a fair way to do it."

He also stimulated self-respect among his men by insisting on a high standard of neatness in their

camp and individual quarters, himself taking the lead with enthusiasm. He never put up a tent, whether for the stay of a week or of six months, without decorating it with such simple garlands as the woods afforded, setting up his books and pictures in a homelike way, and contriving pleasant arbors and approaches to shelter it. In the same spirit the tents of the regiment were pitched in even lines; trees planted to shade the company streets and the streets themselves neatly sanded. Said he, "Though I am a poor housekeeper, I am a good camp-maker."

"Camp Stanton, Benedict, Maryland,
"February 8, 1864.

"I am writing in my own tent. I have a man whose sole business is to keep my tent in good order and my fire a-going, and so zealous is he that on warm days like this he almost roasts me by the great blaze that he makes up. Cedar is now burning and the room is filled with a fragrance that exhales from the wood. It is almost equal to the perfume of sandalwood. My floor is swept eight or ten times a day, and although I do my best to scatter things around I don't succeed very well. The 'Dominie' has a great taste for natural history and botany. He has decorated the room with boughs of holly and a cunning bird's nest nestles among the evergreen leaves. My furniture is simple, a bunk, a chair, a desk, two boxes, one for a seat and one for a wash-stand, comprising it all. I have several shelves laden with books and papers. All around the room are suspended on nails various articles; my sword, sash, rubber overcoat, woollen (blue) overcoat, haver-

sack, clothes, and the Dominie's things. Everything is neat, tidy, comfortable and homelike. I have plenty of books, as Tennyson, Virgil, Pope's 'Iliad,' Mitchell's 'Lectures on Astronomy,' 'Kavanagh' and 'Outre Mer,' Professor Wilson's 'Noctes Ambrosianae' (which are magnificent), etc.; also many military works, as Jomini, Schults, etc.

"I never enjoyed myself better than here. Have plenty of visitors. Many of the officers sing. Dominie's tenor is excellent and we frequently serenade the camps. Our collection of songs is rare, and we sometimes get a lot of officers together and prolong our hilarity over oysters, etc., till late. There are plenty of splendid fellows here among the officers. The colored troops have much better officers than the State volunteer regiments."

Writing twenty years later of these days he says:

"How we studied and drilled! General Birney driving us hard. He proved himself a great organizer of camps. His service in Maryland in raising colored troops was a bold, successful and grand work. Secretary Stanton was back of him. President Lincoln did not seem to feel quite so sure of a step not strictly legal.

"Many a master who came to get a receipt for his human property was halted by a sentinel who two days before had been his slave.

"The old flag in our camp was like the brazen serpent raised in the wilderness. Once in sight of it, across the sentry's beat was instant freedom. How the men sang at night around their camp fires! Much of it was rude, uncouth music, and the officers complained of it. One night I was drawn out of my tent by a wonder-

ful chorus. The men had struck up an old church hymn—'They look like men of war; all arm'd and dress'd in uniform, they look like men of war.'* It

*THE ENLISTED SOLDIERS

Sung by the men of the United States colored volunteers.

1. Hark! listen to the trumpeters,
They call for volunteers;
On Zion's bright and flow'ry mount,
Behold the officers.

REFRAIN.—They look like men, they look like men,
They look like men of war;
All arm'd and dress'd in uniform,
They look like men of war.

2. Their horses white, their armor bright,
With courage bold they stand,
Enlisting soldiers for their King
To march to Canaan's land.—REFRAIN.

3. It sets my heart quite in a flame
A soldier thus to be;
I will enlist, gird on my arms,
And fight for liberty.—REFRAIN.

4. We want no cowards in our band
That will their colors fly;
We call for valiant-hearted men
Who're not afraid to die.—REFRAIN.

5. To see our armies on parade,
How martial they appear!
All armed and dressed in uniform,
They look like men of war.—REFRAIN.

6. They follow their great General,
The great Eternal Lamb,
His garment stained in His own blood,
King Jesus is His name.—REFRAIN.

7. The trumpets sound, the armies shout,
They drive the host of hell;
How dreadful is our God to adore,
The great Immanuel!—REFRAIN.

fitted the scene, and their hearty singing of it sent through me a sensation I shall never forget. It became their battle-hymn. These were the dramatics of war; the dynamics came later.

"I did not then realize how wise it was to put the black man into uniform and use him as a United States soldier, though the pay was but $7 a month; white soldiers received $13 a month.* Treating him as a soldier made him one. The Negro rallied grandly to the duty required. There was, as there has been ever since, more in him than we expected to find and more than his old masters ever dreamed of.

"Both armies despised our black troops in those days; but before the war was over they were drilling Negro troops in the Capitol Square at Richmond, Virginia, to help save the Confederacy.

"I was called to command a party to hunt a Southerner who had shot, under excitement, one of our recruiting officers, and had the unpleasant duty of searching the house of a charming family who had most kindly entertained me the week before.

"My soldiers wished to do their whole duty. As I galloped one day by the pioneer corps, who were returning from woodchopping, they solemnly presented axes.

"The sentries were loyal, but not always clear-headed. A party of officers lugging slyly into camp a keg of beer were halted with 'Who comes here?' 'Comrades, bearing the body of a deceased brother,' was the reply. The solemn-sounding words and the dignity of death overcame the awe-struck guard, who let them in without the countersign.

"Mess life was usually hilarious. The 'Anvil Chorus'

*After May 22, 1864, the Negro troops received pay equal to the whites.

was produced with great effect with tin cups, knives and tin plates.

"With all the care in selecting men, the mortality was great. The men lived and were clothed differently than usual. Pneumonia carried off many. The new quarters, built of logs and mud, were damp. Even on their own ground, with no climatic change whatever, the death rate was high. One reason was, no doubt, their superstitious fears excited by sickness. The doctors afterward said that the black soldiers bore surgical operations with wonderful fortitude, but in ordinary sickness their pluck failed and they gave up."

At Benedict was a school for Negro soldiers, probably an excellent example of the military schools that were springing up here and there in the South wherever colored soldiers were stationed, and it is interesting to note that to Armstrong was given the presidency of the "college." The journal resumes:

"There are five ladies from Boston at this place teaching, sent at General Birney's request by a Boston society. I am in charge of the college, which is an old secesh tobacco barn, cleaned out, ventilated, and illuminated by a few tallow candles; well seated and holds 500 men. The school is held two hours by day and two hours in the evening, and it is a sight to see the soldiers groping after the very least knowledge. They are principally learning their letters; a pitiable sight, and thank slavery for it. In book knowledge, in drill and all military duty they make remarkable progress. At such a time one realizes the curse that has been upon them. Slavery makes brutes of men, and then refuses

to give them freedom because they are so brutish. I think those men have a good reason for fighting and that they will fight."

"Steam Propeller and Transport Ship 'United States,'

"March 4, 1864, 7:30 o'clock P. M.

"Chesapeake Bay, near mouth of Patuxent River.

"*Dear Mother:* Most snugly and cozily am I ensconced in an arm chair in the ladies' saloon of this new and elegant steamer of 1,278 tons.

"We have on board 1,300 colored soldiers—one and one-third regiments—bound for Hilton Head, South Carolina. The evening is lovely as lovely can be, but rather chilly. So, after going all over the ship and seeing that the men were as comfortable as could be, and drinking in delight for awhile as I viewed from the top of the bulwarks the sky, the stars, the gorgeous sunset clouds and the glassy sea, I have taken my portfolio from my valise and in this quiet place turned my thoughts homeward. At my feet lies our noble St. Bernard and Newfoundland dog Charlie—the noblest brute I ever saw; at my elbow sits 'Dominie' H—— (the chaplain). . . . Every one is gay to-night. This is so far a pleasure sail. Some are playing cards, some are singing, some reading, all are merry. But who will come back of all these whose hearts now throb with life, whose eyes are lit with the hopes within them? Never mind; our term may indeed be a little shorter for this war, but at the longest how brief it is! And so I don't bother myself much about possibilities, but strive rather to obey the calls of the present and trust in God.

"If I fall, be assured that I never was better prepared than now for the worst. Since entering this branch of the service I have felt the high duty and sacredness of

my position. It is no sacrifice for me to be here; it is rather a glorious opportunity, and I would be nowhere else than here if I could, and nothing else than an officer of colored troops if I could. This content, this almost supreme satisfaction has shed a rich glow upon my life. I have felt, and do feel, like a very apostle of human liberty striking the deadliest possible blow at oppression; and what duty is more glorious than that? What nobler work has been given to man since the Reformation? I feel more than ever in sympathy with the good, the holy, the just and the true, and the blessedness of religion has descended upon me with a sweetness, a beauty, a richness and a power that it never had before. Besides all this, I have a certain consciousness that I am no disgrace to this sacred service, which I think is well based. I certainly could ask no pleasanter relations than I now hold to my fellow officers."

The expedition to Hilton Head was made for the purpose of reënforcing Port Royal, a post which, though surrounded by rebels, had been in the hands of the Federals since November, 1861. There was little actual fighting. The picket line, twenty miles in length, was in no place over a mile from the enemy, and at many points the outposts were only separated by a stream, so that occasional friction occurred.

Here Armstrong stayed four weary months, the routine of camp life broken only by occasional raids in the enemy's territory—casual affairs which gave no satisfaction or definite results, but which served to increase his confidence in his black troops—

and by the social pleasures which he extracted from almost any situation. Early in August he wrote to his friend Archibald Hopkins, who was engaged in active service:

"For myself I am one of the most miserable of men. I never was so wretched. No disappointment of love, no crushing sorrow could so prostrate me as the feeling that I am idling and loafing on these sands, while my old comrades and others are struggling so nobly in Virginia. . . . I would rather grind a hand-organ for the edification of the mule-teams of the Army of the Potomac than review a dress parade of a regiment down here.

"Thus it is always. Some men's hopes must be realized and the hopes of some must fail. God only is great, and any service of His is good enough for mortals. The fact is, I am mortally jealous!"

About August 5th came the welcome order to return to Virginia. There the main action centered about Petersburg, which had been in a state of siege since June, and toward this city the Ninth Regiment, still part of Birney's corps, now under General Butler in the Army of the James, was directed to move. Their way inland was a hard-fought one. Severe brushes occurred at various Confederate breastworks and other fortifications. Armstrong was overjoyed to be again where something was going on. "We are bound to glory with a fair wind," he wrote; "nothing but working and fighting ahead."

The following incident of the approach to Petersburg, which occurred when he was ordered to attack a certain formidable breastwork, shows the control of his troops which Armstrong had acquired through his constant watchfulness for their comfort:

"Next day there was a bloody assault on the enemy's works, which were captured, and my regiment was sent to occupy a portion of them. I went in under a heavy front and flank fire, got into position in the rifle-pits, and for fifteen minutes or more we had it hot and heavy. My men fell fast, but never flinched. They fired coolly and won great praise. I walked along the line three or four times, and as the work was hardly breast high was much exposed. I passed many killed along my path, and the wounded went in numbers to the rear. Finally, however, the rebs flanked us on the left and forced us out. Standing there in line we were harassed by an unseen foe hidden in the bushes. It was impossible to hold the position, and I ordered them to walk, and they did so the whole distance, shot at by the unseen enemy as they went, and having to climb over fallen trees and go through rough ground. They got back panting with fatigue and lay down exhausted. But orders came, and off we went to *retake the rifle-pits*.

"My worn-out regiment and half another were ordered to do what a whole white regiment had done before, and to take works which twice their number had just failed to hold against the enemy. We were to attack five times our number, and that, too, behind strong works protected by timber felled in front.

"It was madness in our general; it was death to us, sure death—total annihilation. The order was given,

'Forward!' Off we went cheerfully to our doom. I never felt more calm and ready for anything, but just as we had advanced a few yards another general came up and ordered us to halt and not attack. He saved us. He was General Terry."

By the end of August the Ninth Regiment was encamped before Petersburg. The army, though commanded by Grant, was in a demoralized condition, owing in part to the recent defeat at Cold Harbor and in part to the low character of our bounty-paid troops, who were constantly arriving as reënforcements. The insubordination of the white troops probably did not extend to the colored, who had their separate quarters and messes, and whose officers were, as has been said, men of unusual courage and character.

Armstrong was marked even among his fellow officers for his daring. While encamped before Petersburg he selected for his men a sheltered ravine out of reach of the enemy's guns, while he himself pitched his tent on an elevation close by, across which the enemy's cannon-balls were continually ricochetting, placing him in hourly peril by day and night. He felt that the morale of the colored troops could only be maintained by a commander who showed himself superior to fear. As illustrating this habitual self-command a brother officer relates the following incident: Armstrong came into his tent one day, having ridden from his own quarters during a severe shelling, and remarked

that a shell had burst directly in front of him. "I instinctively reined in my horse!" he said, as if apologizing for an act of cowardice.

"Although a martinet in discipline where military principle was concerned," says the same officer, "his soldiers felt toward him a regard that amounted almost to deification."

The siege at Petersburg continued through summer and fall, with but few sorties on either side, the pickets alone keeping up a desultory warfare.

"In the Trenches Before Petersburg,
"August 30, 1864.

"The world moves on, and so do regiments. There is nothing so unsettled as a soldier's camp or life; you never know here what to expect. One fine afternoon I was ordered to retake a portion of the picket line from which our troops had fallen back. I went expecting a fight. Charged the lost line with three companies, but the enemy did not wait for us and ran without even firing a piece.

"We had a beautiful little camp over the Appomattox near Bermuda Hundred, at Hatchett's. I have everything as regular and handsome and clean as possible, and my camps are not only the cleanest, but the handsomest in the brigade. I always work quickly, and give clear, positive instructions to my officers, and they obey my orders with utmost fidelity as a general thing. Here is an instance. Yesterday our sister and rival regiment, the Seventh United States Colored Troops, and my own, the Ninth United States Colored Troops, were ordered to establish permanent camps in the second line of works. I went to work

and in four hours had strong, massive bomb-proofs built. The other regiment had only burrowed a few holes in the dirt, and when last night we were heavily shelled, my men were as safe and comfortable as they could have been in Kawaiahao church, while the other regiments around us were crawling into holes and dodging about, well scared.

"The fact was, I sent my men out and 'gobbled up' all the spades, axes and logs in the neighborhood. During this shelling I sat in my tent, where I am now writing, and lifting my eyes could see the mortar shells gliding like meteors through the sky; some going and some coming. Several shells burst quite near us, not over 100 yards off. On such occasions I seldom seek shelter, although I require my men to take it. The chances of an individual are very great, and besides there is nothing very dangerous about shells unless they begin to drop close by. It is a splendid sight to see shelling at night, to watch a huge 13-inch mortar shell shoot far up into the heavens and then seem to glide awhile among the stars, a ball of light, then slowly descend in terror and vengeance into the heart of a great city whose spires are in sight from here. . . ."

"I forgot in my last to tell you about the flag of truce in our campaign at Deep Bottom, over the James River. It was to bury our dead, and being in command of our picket line that day, I was present. We met the rebels half-way between the lines. I saw thousands of them swarming their works, and scores came to meet us, bringing on stretchers the ghastly, horribly mutilated dead whom we had lost in the charge of the day previous. The sight and smell would have made you wild, but we are used to it. I had no particular business, and so I talked with the rebel officers and found myself conversing with Colonel Little, of the

Eleventh Georgia Regiment, and with the rebel General Gary. They were very gentlemanly, and we had a delightful chat, or rather argument, of two hours; the Colonel being very social and jovial, and the General trying hard to convince me that slavery is divine and that I was wrong. I frankly told him that I was a foreigner, a Sandwich Islander, who had no local sympathies; but seeing the great issue to be that of freedom or slavery for 4,000,000 souls, had given myself to the war cheerfully, and counted no sacrifice too great for the cause. I told them I commanded a colored regiment, and all this, instead of disgusting them, seemed to win their respect; rather unusual, since officers of Negro troops are commonly despised in the South.

"The General said he thought it more reasonable to fight, as I was doing, for a principle than to fight merely to restore a Union which was only a compact and to which they were not morally bound when they considered the other side had violated the agreement. The truth is, I partially agreed with him. The Union is to me little or nothing. I see no great principle necessarily involved in it. I see only the 4,000,000 slaves, and for and with them I fight. The rebs told me they buried a good many of our colored men, for they were the very men we had fought the day before.

"Well, the General tried to show me the evils of slavery were imaginary, that it is divine and all right, etc. His manner and language were charming. He was a graduate of Harvard (class of '54, I believe). He did not, however, admit that slavery was the corner-stone of the Confederacy, and he further assured me that Alexander Stephens, who used that famous expression about slavery being the corner-stone, etc., had retracted his language at a subsequent time,

and his opinion is, I think, strongly supported in the South."

The period spent in the trenches before Petersburg was a time of heavy responsibilities for Armstrong. He was obliged to work day and night strengthening and improving the works held by his brigade; and at the end of this time, about October 1st, when his regiment was removed from Petersburg and sent to a point very near the rebel lines, seven miles from Richmond, he succumbed to fatigue and went to the officers' hospital near Fort Monroe, only a few rods from the scenes of his later life-work. While he was there his regiment was sent to attack Fort Gilmer, one of the main defenses of Richmond. Concerning this attack he wrote home as follows:

"My regiment was sent alone and unsupported to attack a tremendously powerful fort supported by two other strong forts, also by a heavy line of breastworks, and before this immense line was a very large, deep ditch and slashed timber for over half a mile, making it almost impossible to even get to the enemy's lines. The Ninth went in nobly, was raked and cut to pieces, and finally fell back before a hellish fire of grape, canister, shrapnel and shell from three forts.

"To go forward would have been certain destruction. The Negroes never turned their backs, but walked steadily 'into the mouth of hell' until the commanding officer ordered a retreat. About one-third of the regiment was *hors de combat.* No men were ever braver than the slaves of Maryland. I was of course absent, but the officers of the regiment were heard after

SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG

Taken about the time of his sojourn at the officers' hospital at Hampton, Va.

they came back to curse the general who managed them so badly, and to 'thank God that Colonel Armstrong was not there, for if he had been there they would all have been in hell or Richmond.' They don't expect to get the order from me to retreat. I only tell the truth when I tell you that I am numbered among the fighting men. Still I think I should never sacrifice my men for nothing; such a course is wrong morally."

On returning to the field he was put for a short time in command of the second brigade of his division, and on November 3d was promoted to the colonelcy of the Eighth United States Colored Troops, which were stationed close to the borders of Richmond. Of this new command he wrote:

"The men are tried soldiers, and it is considered the best colored regiment in Birney's division. I have a splendid camp and a very fine brass band—the only one in the division. Men all live in log houses, so do I. Have cozy fireplaces, where we sit and think hour after hour or read. The 'Household Book of Poetry' is everything to me; it is my constant friend, but unluckily books are scarce, and it is in great demand. It is now on a visit to headquarters first brigade of my division, and my own brigade commander sends frequently for it, and others—all wish to get it. The collection is, I think, a superb one. One of the sweetest things in it is 'Lycidas,' by Milton. Have you noticed the 'Trailing Arbutus,' by Rose Terry? The last stanza is exquisite.

"There is some talk of arming my regiment with the famous and deadly Spencer repeating rifle. The rebels are in terror of it, and it is given to but very

few regiments in the army. It is very elaborate and expensive.

"We are kept constantly on the *qui vive*. The enemy is near. I can sit at my tent door and see their long line of earthworks, with immensely strong forts thrown in every quarter of a mile. Their guns are pointed at us and ours at them. I can see their tents easily. They can at any time throw a 100-pound shell right into my camp, yes, a dozen of them; we are in easy artillery range, but both sides seem to have tacitly agreed not to fire, and so we live on, perfectly at ease and always ready. The pickets stand watching each other some 300 yards apart, often much less. During the last two nights they have attacked our lines at Bermuda Hundred and got us all up, which was not agreeable. . . .

"I have a splendid regiment and a splendid opportunity; shall do or die; shall be distinguished or extinguished—that is, if I shall have the chance."

But the chance never came. Winter and the war drew together to a close. April 3d Petersburg was evacuated, and on April 9th Lee, unable to escape from the tightening lines of the Union forces, saw that he could not save Richmond, and signed terms of capitulation. Armstrong witnessed the surrender and thus describes it:

"Appomattox Court House, Virginia,
"April 9, 1863.

"God is great! To-day, by His help, the great Confederate General and his army have surrendered unconditionally. I have just been viewing from a

near eminence the captive host, the artillery and wagon trains.

"Yesterday General Custer took all the supplies sent from Lynchburg to Lee's army; our army closed in around the rebels, and this morning they found themselves surrounded and without provisions. Early we advanced and our skirmish lines met those of the enemy. Mine drove not only the rebel skirmishers, but also their line of battle. We expected a fight—I never felt more like it. I mounted my noble stallion and was ready to lead on at the word. A few bullets whistled around, a few shells passed over—the rebs gave way—all was quiet, there was a rumor of surrender; we waited; other rumors came, and finally it was certain that the cruel war was over. The first inkling I had of it was the continuous cheering of troops on our right. Soon staff officers galloped up with the news that Lee was making terms of surrender; the firing ceased. It was impossible to realize that the terrible army of Lee was in existence no longer! The truth was stunning. As for myself, I felt a sadness, a feeling that the colored soldiers had not done enough, been sufficiently proved. We just missed a splendid chance of taking a rebel battery an hour before Sheldon's cavalry came tumbling back—the rebs were driving them, and we were put in to arrest their advance, which we easily did, for they no sooner saw us than they halted and retired before our skirmishers. This delay lost us our chance."

Although he now received a brevet title of brigadier-general of volunteers, and commanded brigades for some months to come, he never while in the army wore his brigadier's stars, using the

familiar colonel's eagles. When a friend questioned him about this habit, he laughed and said: "Oh, I guess I'll stick to the old birds."

In spite of the fact that the Civil War was over, the colored troops were not at once disbanded. Mexico had also been in the throes of civil war, and the insurgents were plotting for the overthrow of the Emperor Maximilian. To lend friendly support to the republican insurgents and to secure our own boundary lines during the confusion it was decided to send a small force to the Mexican border. Of this force Armstrong's regiment, the Eighth United States Colored Troops, was a part, and May 30, 1865, he embarked for Texas, writing a month later to his mother as follows:

"We had a most delightful run from the fort to Mobile Harbor. Most of the way the sea was perfectly smooth, and I was very little seasick. We took the 'outside passage'; passed 'Memory Rock,' the Bahama Islands, Key West and the 'Dry Tortugas.'

"You can hardly imagine how glorious it was to sit on one of the huge paddle-boxes at sunset—seeing the sun go down, the western sky draped in the most gorgeous cloud-tapestry—the ship gliding swiftly through a glassy sea—a brass band discoursing rich music, and a scene of life and pleasure on board. The nights were warm and many of us slept on deck, subject, however, to the inconvenience of being roused very early when the ship was washed down.

"It is no easy matter to regulate a thousand men crowded on shipboard, unused to the sea, sick or uneasy or irritated with ennui. Still, our voyage passed off

very well—the men were kept clean and were fed. I used to have them stripped, 100 at a time, put in the forward part of the ship and then had the hose play on them."

As they approached the mouth of the Rio Grande River, in order to land at Brazos Santiago, the first stopping-place, a shipwreck occurred in which his whole expedition nearly came to a disastrous end.

On attempting to land, they found the sea running very high near the river's mouth. Armstrong left the ship and went ashore to select a camp-ground and assist from the shore side in landing his men.

"I then took my position on a pile of lumber to watch my regiment come ashore, it having been transferred to a large schooner in order to get over the bar, which is very shallow and across which the surf breaks. Indeed, this is an ugly coast and is strewn with wrecks. There is a sand bar and a line of breakers for hundreds of miles along this shore.

"The surf was running high, and lying well over, under a stiff breeze, the vessel stood in for the bar. I had heard it stated that she drew too much water to pass the bar, and knew that the best pilot in port refused to bring her in. The schooner came tearing in, but all at once she stopped, her sails shivered, and there she lay among the breakers with my regiment on board and darkness just coming on.

"I never in my life was more distressed or helpless. Got a boat's crew to pull me out toward the wreck, but it was impossible to reach her. She was fairly crowded with men and I expected to lose half at least of them.

She drifted and thumped along, however, toward the remains of an old steamer, the *Nassau*, formerly wrecked in Banks's expedition, and whose engine was partly out of water. The greatest danger was that the schooner would drift against this wreck and break to pieces. This was at eleven o'clock at night."

He found some Italian boatmen who undertook to unload the steamer, but looking about for a quicker means of saving his men he found a large metallic life-boat, perfectly sound, which had drifted ashore. This he manned with his own officers and men, and in spite of a recently broken arm took the steering-oar himself and put out to the schooner.

"It was most exciting and difficult, as my right arm is nearly useless for hard work. The rollers would come in and pick up my boat and carry it like a shot for a few rods, and as it was so short and light it was difficult to keep it in the right position. I wonder I did not break my arm or get stunned or swamped, for the oar would sometimes be snapped out of my hand, and the boat would slew around and I could barely fix her for the next wave. The surf kept increasing, and my little boat would sometimes stand up, almost, or be lost in spray. But nothing serious happened till the schooner broke away and drifted up so close that the men jumped off.

"The discipline of the men never broke, but every man stood at his post till called for. Those on shore were organized into parties for seizing the boats as the waves swept them in, generally half full of water; helped the men out, bailed out the boats and started us off again for the ship. Others were boiling coffee

for the wet and drenched troops; the Chaplain dealt out whisky. All those working were stripped to the waist and barefoot. Officers and men pulled oars side by side It was exciting.

"At last, after I had got about 400 men off in boats, the schooner drifted close in and the troops jumped off, throwing their knapsacks overboard and jumping after them. I only lost about ten guns and twenty knapsacks, and no lives."

Brazos Santiago is a long, low island, entirely destitute of verdure and below the level of the highest winter tides.

"There is no wood to be had, no water in the region. We use condensed water often while it is warm, or the water of the Rio Grande, which is nine miles off and is brought here in schooners. It is very nasty just now, as the river is swollen.

"At one time there were 10,000 troops here three days, and 2,000 gallons of water per day supplied. Some of my regiment walked to the Rio Grande, loaded with canteens and dragging a barrel for water. There was much suffering.

"We get no fresh vegetables or vegetables of any kind and seldom secure fresh meat. Our men are worked to death unloading vessels, and we are all disgusted and greatly provoked and are fast getting demoralized. We seldom receive letters or newspapers —nothing ever happens.

"We expect to move soon up the Rio Grande, but here there are no mosquitoes or sand-flies. Further up there are swarms of flies and mosquitoes and 'swifts' and snakes. The 'prickly pear' covers the whole country. The prospect is dismal, withering, though,

speaking for myself, I am not feeling very uneasy or demoralized."

By August the regiment, with one other, was encamped at Ringgold Barracks, where it remained till early in October. This was a dull but healthful spot, and as the officers became acquainted with the people they varied the monotony of camp life by giving balls and dinners to their friends. One of the latter occasions he described to his sister:

"To-day I gave a dinner to the commander of the Liberal forces in the north of Mexico and his staff. I had invited him to come and bring a few friends, expecting about five in all. A small army came. A great cloud of dust announced their coming and made us tremble. We were amazed, confounded, dumb! Were we to feed a regiment? Your brother Samuel was in a fix about that time. I hadn't invited the whole army, yet it came. The General dismounted. We rushed (literally) into each other's arms, the Mexican expression of cordiality. I hugged half a score of these Indians. My own field and staff officers did the same. Oh, what a funny scene! None of them could talk English; we couldn't talk Spanish. A weasel-faced quack doctor (surgeon-general of the army) acted as interpreter. Polite inquiries were exchanged and diplomatic observations (and lies) passed and repassed. My line tents (ten large wall tents) were nearly filled and I had in my tent the only interpreter. There was lots of glorious good feeling and lots of hugging and clinking of glasses, and bows and grimaces, and then more hugging and lively conversation on a very small stock of words, not over a dozen (in Spanish). But

the dinner! Ghosts of all housekeepers, embodied and disembodied! The day of miracles being past and a *deus ex machina* coming down on only a few favored stages, we had to resort to substantial and ordinary means.

"We dined ten at a time. I took the principal men to the first table, which was set under a canvas covering, and which was decorated with a common reed much resembling sorghum; sorghum on the floor, overhead, and on every side.

"Think of a May party or a Fourth-of-July picnic with sorghum boughs and wreaths! We had, after all, a 'right smart' dinner, and of course the proper toasts were proposed and responded to, all of which was exceedingly novel and rich. I spoke on behalf of the American people; made touching allusions to the national sympathy, kicked old 'Max' out of the halls of the Montezumas, and made my chief guest the hero and martyr of Mexican liberty, all of which was put into Spanish and swallowed (?). Some attended dress parade. Others sat down at the table, and then the regimental band performed. Everybody grinned and said, '*Muchisima gusta*,' which means 'infinite pleasure.'

"It being nearly dark, our guests took their departure amid the most overwhelming assurances of mutual satisfaction and violent caressing. I hugged General Espinoza five times before he departed, and embraced more than I have any recollection of.

"This hugging is delightful. I wish it were generally introduced. Confound the formality of our society! Let society learn the etiquette of the heart on the banks of the Rio Grande—dethrone the head that now rules! And so they departed amid the '*adios*' of everybody and 'Hail, Columbia' from the band."

From the same place he wrote:

"Camp Eighth United States Colored Troops.
"Ringgold Barracks, Texas,
"August 23, 1865.

"I find that I am not polite and accomplished. I aim rather to be just and manly, and patiently seek to realize the higher, more heroic qualities. These are a guarantee of success, not what is commonly called so, but of that fulness and completeness in character that gives an inner and calm and rich assurance that one is a true man and makes one satisfied no matter how circumstances may change. This inner strength is the thing, and it is completed, perfected and made glorious by religion. Thus one, though poor and unnoticed, may be greater, grander and far more beautiful than anything that is made of the costliest stone. Men are as a rule heathens; we adore as many absurdities as the Hindoos; society impels us to a false manhood, as false as it can be. Here it is easier to be manly, to cultivate noble aspirations than in the most pious New England village. A greasy, dirty Mexican, fighting for the liberty of his country, inspires me more than the whole faculty of Andover Theological Seminary would. Don't let us pity the Zulus and the Eskimo too much. We are almost as blind as they—they by darkness, we by too much light. Soldiering has sometimes set me to thinking. My few opportunities in the army have been of far more use to me than the abundant measure I had before. When a meeting-house burns up I care very little; under the trees it is better—under the evening sky as the sun goes down in glory (as we worship) is the grandest time and place for it. I am terribly down on two sermons every Sunday. The drawing-out process is the best and truest. Set the

people to work and the ministers to chewing tobacco if necessary to make them like other men, not still and mannerish, but open, free, hearty and happy. A good hearty, healthy laugh is as bad for the devil as some of the long nasal prayers I have heard—yes, worse. There is religion in music, in the opera. Tell me anything more sacred than the prayer in 'Freischutz' (I spell it wrong)—'Benedictus,' it is called. Is there anything purer than the tender, passionate strains of 'Norma'? Ministers say the opera is bad; I find religion there. They say to walk or ride out on Sunday is wicked. My bethel is by the seashore; there the natural language of my heart is prayer. So of the mountains.

"Good people try to do too much to dodge the devil and to build up a wall to keep him out. What does he do? He helps build the wall. Meet him squarely; fight the inner battle of self, and outward forms—moralities—will take care of themselves. Allow young people to doubt—doubt anything and everything—don't crush doubt, because you crush conviction too. The Hawaiian missionaries have made terrible mistakes in this way."

Early in October he was ordered to Brownsville, Texas, and after a few weeks' stay there received his discharge.

Many were the plans for future work which filled his mind during these his last days in the army. A lieutenant-colonelcy in the First United States Colored Cavalry was offered him, but he did not care for that kind of work. His brothers suggested business openings, and he himself had some thoughts of entering the Freedmen's Bureau, then just

becoming prominent in work for the Negro. The world must have spread a very agreeable prospect to the young soldier, well born, well educated and full of physical vigor; peace brought with it new prosperity, and everywhere he saw room for men of enterprise. To his mother he wrote:

"I have asked Baxter to let me know what openings there are in California, either of lucrative business or of other kind. I may go to New York City if Will can get me fixed off there. I expect to begin at the bottom of the ladder and work along. Don't expect to study a profession. I think I shall get into the right place by and by."

The third anniversary of his enlistment, a few weeks before he was discharged, brought with it a new conception of what the future might hold in store for him.

"To-day, September 1st, has been quiet and serene. A good deal of business, but steady and easy. But one eventful thing has occurred. My lieutenant-colonel, major and myself were in conversation together in my tent. The subject of citizenship was mentioned, and one remarked that by act of Congress to serve in the army three years was to become an American citizen. I at once remembered that yesterday I had been just three years in the United States service, and this morning for the first time walked out into the sunlight and air a citizen of the Grand Republic. The thought was tremendous! To be forever under the shelter of the broad pinions of the American eagle! To be one of the mighty brood of that glorious bird; to sing

'My Country, 'Tis of Thee'; to call 'the flag of *my* country' that glorious banner that has for four years been wreathed in smoke and torn and stained in countless battles, and now finally and forever triumphant—this is a thought too immense to be grappled at once, but enough to excite the profoundest emotions. We all rose to our feet and I embraced each of the two who were with me, and we all thought it was very jolly. I have thrown off the '*kapa*'* mantle and assumed the toga of the Republic.

"There may be a place for me in the struggle for right and wrong in this country."

At this critical time in his career his thoughts turned more and more from making money in some well-chosen business enterprise toward the service of his fellow men. He wrote:

"I have not given myself to arms, although I have been one of the most fortunate of soldiers. I have chosen no profession, nor do I at present think I shall study one.

My capabilities are of an executive nature, and I shall seek some chance of usefulness where I can use my talents to the most advantage and for the cause of humanity.

"My purpose is to serve the Great Master in some way as well as I can; to be of use to my fellow men; to give the life so marvellously spared and wonderfully blessed to the source of all mercy and blessing. I shall probably not enter the ministry; am not made for a preacher. I should rather *minister* than be a minister."

* Cloth made by native Hawaiians.

Certainly he regarded the uncertainties of the future with no dread.

"There is something in this standing face to face with destiny, looking into its darkness, that is inspiring: it appeals to manhood; it is thrilling, like going into action."

A GROUP OF FRIENDS AT HAMPTON IN FREEDMEN'S BUREAU TIMES

Armstrong in the center

CHAPTER V

The Freedmen's Bureau. 1866–1872

After his discharge, Armstrong went to New York, where he spent several weeks with his brother. Toward the close of winter he made his way to Washington with some thought of applying for a government position, but what he saw of political office-seeking in the President's waiting-room so disgusted him that he gave up this idea, and remembering his former plan of work for the Negro in the South, applied to the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands for a position.

The Freedmen's Bureau had come into being in response to the crying needs of the Negroes left helplessly adrift during the closing months of the war when the Emancipation Proclamation had loosened home ties and there appeared neither refuge for the suffering women, children and infirm nor occupation for the able-bodied. It was made a department of Government by act of Congress, 1865, and put under the leadership of General O. O. Howard, who, as Commissioner, alone directed its operations and selected the men that were to do its work.

This work General Howard describes as follows:

"The first consideration was how to do the work before us. The plantations were all left uncultivated; some were abandoned, all had lost their slaves. People said, 'We can't raise cotton with only free labor.' Our task was to show them they could. I started some joint stock companies from the North. Northern capital undertook the work. The result was, more cotton was raised the first year after the war than had been raised in any one year before. Other years were not as successful, but the point was proved and an impulse given to free labor.

"Another work we had to do was to settle the relations between the former master and ex-slave. Troubles were continually arising. To settle these we established courts made up of one agent of the Freedmen's Bureau, one man selected by the whites and one by the Negroes. These courts settled all such difficulties till finally the courts themselves were transferred to the State and local authorities upon condition of the reception of Negro testimony.

"Then there were the land troubles. When the owners abandoned their plantations the colored people settled on them—lived in their houses and used the land.

"Most of the land was given back to the owners by the Government, under our direction and advice. It was often hard on the colored people. I was sorry for them and would have liked sometimes to do differently. Yet I believe it was on the whole better for them. It put them at the bottom of the ladder.

"Then we had a hospital department. That was for the old and decrepit men and women and the sick and disabled who could not take care of themselves. We had also a department to establish asylums for the little children whose fathers had been killed in the

war or who had strayed from their homes and been lost, as many had.

"But the main point we had to attend to was the care of the schools." *

The bureau, with its three departments, economic, charitable and educational, thus held complete control over the doings and prospects of the ex-slave. It was a government within a government, held closely together by an elaborate system of reports from subordinate to superior and directly responsible to its own Commissioner only.

Many besides Samuel Armstrong were looking to the Freedmen's Bureau for the solution of the problems that were vexing the nation. What should be done with the Negro? How secure to him his new political rights? How befriend without pauperizing him? How fit him to care for himself?

People everywhere in the North were asking these questions—people who were not involved in the vortex of political jobbery that surrounded Washington, who had borne the strain of the war for conscience's sake and who were now prepared to shoulder the responsibilities that followed it; and they waited for the Freedmen's Bureau to present effective answers to these questions—answers that should settle the status of the Negro in the South in a permanent and satisfying way. This was not

* Address delivered by General Howard at Hampton Institute, 1889.

the only way in which it was proposed to meet the needs of the Negro; deportation to Africa, segregation of the Negroes in one or two States and in industrial communities managed by the Government were suggested, but the people in general looked to the Freedmen's Bureau to show the way out.

While this organization combined such differing forms of activity, the workers in it themselves presented also varied aspects of character and fitness. Some men and women more zealous than well informed sought in it an outlet to their charitable desires; others, less zealous, found lucrative positions at the expense of their charges; however, many intelligent and public-spirited persons were installed under its direction.

General Howard's policy was to place officers of the regular army at the most responsible points, while civilians were usually employed as agents at less important centers; and when Samuel Armstrong applied, with a letter from his late chief of staff and his brilliant record as an officer of colored troops, he was received favorably.

Concerning the interview General Howard writes:

"Though already a general, General Armstrong seemed to me very young. His quick motions and nervous energy were apparent then. He spoke rapidly and wanted matters decided if possible on the spot. I was then very favorably impressed with his knowledge and sentiment toward the freedmen, and thought he would make a capital sub-commissioner."

There was no vacancy in the department, however, and Armstrong left the office, visited friends and decided to return to New York. But before leaving Washington he again called, satchel in hand, at the office of the Freedmen's Bureau to see if an opening had presented itself since his former visit. As he entered the office one of the aides looked up and said: "We've a great lot of contrabands down on the Virginia Peninsula and can't manage them; no one has had success in keeping them straight. General Howard thinks you might try it." Another conversation with that officer resulted in Armstrong's receiving a double appointment—as agent under the Freedmen's Bureau, having control over ten counties, the fifth sub-district of Virginia, and also as superintendent of schools, or Bureau Superintendent, over a large, loosely defined area.

As agent he was one of eight men who controlled the fortunes of the Negroes and to a certain extent of the whites throughout the State of Virginia, each of the eight holding a district of from six to twelve counties and reporting to Colonel Orlando Brown, at Richmond, who held the office of Assistant Commissioner. As Bureau Superintendent, Armstrong was one of several men holding that office in the State, but he alone usually reported directly to General Howard on all matters connected with the education of the freedmen. General Howard urged that he now officially use the title of General, thinking that it would help him to secure the imme-

diate respect of his subordinates, many of whom were army officers, when he, a young man of twenty-seven, appeared among them as their superior.

About March 15, 1866, Armstrong arrived at Fort Monroe and rode a few miles to his post at the village of Hampton. Hampton is beautifully situated near the mouth of a short tidal river and was once one of the finest towns in the South, but several years before Armstrong's arrival had been burned to the ground, and only massive chimneys, with gaping fireplaces, remained to mark the site of former pleasant homes. The contrabands, like weeds springing up on burned ground, had swarmed over the place, building huts or pitching tents against the old chimneys. Within a radius of three miles from his office lived 7,000 Negroes, camping in this squalid fashion, waiting for they knew not what. The immediately surrounding country under his control was a vast stretch of low, often marshy, partially wooded land, dotted with hospital barracks and log cabins, intersected by the muddy roads of Virginia, and bounded on the east and north by the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and the ocean.

Full of enthusiasm for his work and full of the courage of youth, Armstrong settled himself in his new home. He made his headquarters, with his staff of assistants, at an old mansion near the residence of the teachers employed by the American Missionary Association, and appeared as a conspicuous figure among the isolated little group of Northerners

working under difficult conditions, making many mistakes, yet furthering as best they could what they conceived to be the highest interests of the community.

His associates trusted from the first that his strong, straightforward methods would untangle the network of political and social difficulties in which they had been working. With a happy temperament, an easy control of subordinates and a natural gift for dealing with the Negroes, he inspired general confidence and soon brought about order throughout his district.

He wrote to his mother as follows:

"Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands,

"Headquarters Superintendent Ninth District, Virginia.

"Fort Monroe, Virginia, June 2, 1866.

"*Dear Mother:* I have been on duty in the bureau three months, and a singular experience it has been. Providence seemed to put me in just the place I wanted.

"The work is very difficult; there are here, congregated in little villages, some 5,000 colored people, crowded, squalid, poor, and idle. It is my work to scatter and renovate them; one in which much is expected, but very limited means are given. I think I have secured the confidence of the people as well as of my superiors, at least so far that I am the only civilian in the whole bureau occupying a position of superintendent, which is a special favor from General Howard. All the rest are discharged. How long this work will last I do not know—it may soon die out, or I may be discharged, or it may lead me to some other

work. I am uncertain of the future, but still am confident that all will be well.

"I am living in the so-called 'Massenburg house,' once one of the stateliest of the beautiful village of Hampton, now shorn of its glory—its greenhouse and garden destroyed and its rooms turned into offices and quarters. In the rear of the house is the bureau jail, where I summarily stow away all sorts of people when they are unruly—I have murderers, thieves, liars, and all sorts of disorderly characters—a squad of soldiers under my orders, who make quick work with any troublesome people. I am quite independent and like the position and the work.

. . . . . .

"I have about a dozen officers under me, though I am a civilian, and a glorious field of labor. I have some thirty-four lady teachers from the North. Some splendid people are helping me.

"This place is historic. A little above here is Jamestown, in my district, where the first settlers came, and the ruins of their church are standing. In my field were fought many hard battles, and some of my own.

"This Hampton has been the city of refuge of the Negroes throughout the war—here they came from all Virginia to seek freedom, food and a home; hither caravans daily poured in for months with young, old and helpless, and here they built their little cabins and did what they could.

"Here were raised several colored regiments, which took the men and left the women helpless—and oh, the misery there has been—it can never be told! But the worst is over. The men came not back, since most were killed, disabled or died, and here are their families in my charge; and they are a great care; we issue 18,000 rations a day to those who would die of

starvation were it not for this, and keep their children at school, and get them work and prevent injustice. Take us away and the Negroes might as well all be hanged at once.

. . . . . .

"There is not much peace; work comes on all days of the week, Sundays not excepted. I like it—there is a large field and lots to do. I am compelled to do some speech-making—have held forth at divers times and places to the darkies. Have to deal, too, with some cute, oily white men, smart as steel and smooth as sycophants; it reminds me of the old times when I was editor of the *Hae Hawaii*.

"I am going around to the county court-houses where the Circuit Court holds session (next week) and harangue the mobs.

"To-day is Sunday—went to meeting, sang in choir; dine with Mrs. D——.

"Yesterday I received a courteous note from a highly accomplished and wealthy lady of New York, Miss W——, asking for two photographs of mine; one for Count de Gasparin and one for Laboulaye of France, as one who has drilled the colored troops; she is making a collection of United States officers for these gentlemen.

"You have no idea of what splendid oysters we have here—the best in the world—cheap as dirt—and lots of fish in summer; fine roads and rides.

"I will tell you my counties, so you can see my domain on the map. They are these: Matthews, Gloucester, York, Warwick, Elizabeth City, Charles City, James City, New Kent, and King William counties.

"General Howard told me it was the hardest position to fill he had; there is such ill feeling between whites and blacks, so many paupers, so much idleness, and such an enormous population.

"Shine, ye lucky stars!

"There is a beautiful sheet of water before the village—the scene of the fight between the *Merrimac* and the *Monitor;* the naval rendezvous of the war and twice the base of operations of the Army of the Potomac.

. . . . . .

"The work is splendid, and if God leads me as He has done, I shall have nothing to fear—all will be well.

"I am known as General Armstrong by everybody."

He wrote later in an official report concerning his work at Hampton:

"Colored squatters by thousands and General Lee's disbanded soldiers returning to their families came together in my district on hundreds of 'abandoned' farms which the Government had seized and allowed the freedmen to occupy. There was irritation, but both classes were ready to do the fair thing. It was about a two years' task to settle matters by making terms with the landowners, who employed many laborers on their restored homes. Swarms went back to the 'old plantation' on passes, with thirty days' rations.

"Hardest of all was to settle the ration question; about 2,000 having been fed for years were demoralized and seemed hopeless. Notice was given that in three months, on October 1, 1866, all rations would be stopped except to those in hospital, for whom full provision was made. Trouble was expected, but there was not a ripple of it or a complaint that day. Their resource was surprising. The Negro in a tight place is a genius.

. . . . . .

"In general," said he, "the whites were well disposed, but inactive in suppressing any misconduct of the

lower class. Friendliness between the races was general, broken only by political excitement, and was due, I think, to the fact that they had been brought up together, often in the most intimate way, from childhood; a surprise to me, for on missionary ground parents—with the spirit of martyrs—take every pains to prevent contact of their children with the natives around them.

"Martial law prevailed; there were no civil courts, and for many months the bureau officer in each county acted on all kinds of cases, gaining generally the confidence of both races. When martial law was over and the rest were everywhere discontinued, the military court at Hampton was kept up by common consent for about six months.

"Scattered families were reunited. From even Louisiana—for the whole South was mapped out, each county officered and as a rule wisely administered—would come inquiries about the relatives and friends of one who had been sold to traders years before, and great justice and humanity were done in bringing together broken households."

The Freedmen's Bureau was not the only agency at work for the relief of the freedmen. Fourteen different societies, distinct in operation though alike in aim, had their agents at work in the South, supplemented further by freedmen's departments in the northern churches and private charity acting through various channels.

Wherever the Negroes were found there were gathered together missionaries, lady teachers, soldiers, and coöperating with all, supplementing

their work and yet in authority over them all, the Freedmen's Bureau.

There was much room for individual action among the agents of the bureau. It was General Howard's policy to set forth clearly to his subordinates, by means of frequent circular letters, the general policy to be pursued, and then to leave to their discretion the execution of details. Thus the bureau offered much scope to a man of executive powers, while demanding the exercise of constant tact and originality.

There was opportunity for pleasure as well as routine work in this life, and that of a sort that suited Armstrong's tastes exactly. He owned a boat and often made tours of several days, accompanied only by a Negro boy, perhaps camping at night and living on salt pork and hard tack.* These excursions were often of a business nature, for the purpose of inspecting schools and the work of sub-

*From one of these tours he wrote home the following reflections on the political situation:

"Let me animadvert briefly on the political situation. Republicans are increasing since the election of Grant, and several southern gentlemen about here are much more radical than I. 'When the devil was sick the devil a monk would be; when the devil was well the devil a monk was he.' Scores are getting down off the fence and are rushing wildly to the Republican lines and already begin to talk of what they have suffered for their principles. I was buttonholed this evening by a devoted radical lately converted, who has confidential talks with darkies 'behind houses and around corners,' and was bored with an address upon 'the party,' its principles and its meanest men, swallowed without a gulp—without a wink. There are good, noble dogs and 'yaller' mean dogs. So there are yellow dogs, humanely speaking, who roll over on their backs figuratively and wag their tails at the rulers of the hour."

ordinates. He took other tours on horseback, and while riding through the Virginia pine woods often caught glimpses of Negro life and character, and received impressions of the value of the obscure work of faithful missionary teachers, who were sources of true light to their flocks in the pine woods, that proved of inestimable value to him in later life.

He had not been long at Hampton when a plan which promised some relief for the immediate needs of the freedmen suggested itself, and to many ladies in the neighborhood of Boston he sent the following circular letter, which contains his first mention of plans for industrial education:

"Bureau Refugees, Freedmen and
Abandoned Lands,
"Fort Monroe, April 16, 1866.

"*My Dear Madam:* I beg leave to make a few statements to you regarding the condition of the colored people in this place, in the hope that through your influence their destitution and suffering may be in some way relieved.

"There are in this vicinity about 1,700 infirm or helpless men, women and children drawing rations from Government, most of whom, should this aid be withdrawn, would suffer extremely.

"Yet nearly one-half of these are in this dependent condition solely because there is nothing for them to do and they cannot go where there is work. Most are women who have from one to five children apiece. They are generally able-bodied, apt to learn and anxious to get employment.

"I have thought that many northern families might

be willing to take one of these women with one or two children who are old enough not to be a great care to the mother and are able to do something for themselves; especially in the country, the children might make themselves very useful; they could be bound out for a term of years and thus make a return for the labor and expense of their bringing up. Mothers will not leave their children, and in fact, from local as well as family ties, it is very difficult to persuade these women to go North or elsewhere. Yet they seem anxious to work, and I am confident that many valuable servants can be obtained here. . . . Their future is dark, for the bureau cannot last long, and then they must choose between starvation and crime.

"Just now hundreds of able-bodied men are thrown out of employment by the oyster law lately passed by the Legislature. It requires taxes and bonds, which not one oysterman in a hundred can comply with, and the penalties of violation are very severe—they tax them $6.20 per annum per man, who has also to give a bond of $500. . . . I should have mentioned that few trained cooks or house-servants can be got—that class fled with their owners, who abandoned their silver but kept their domestics. Those for whom I plead are mostly field hands, with but a smattering of culinary training.

"I wish some society at the North would undertake to find places for some of them, also for their children, and then communicate with me.

"Many might prefer to employ men and boys. The Negro is a hostler constitutionally; he rides and drives by instinct. A large number of such could be furnished.

. . . . . .

"The daytime of our labor for the freed people is short. The North has not as yet done its full duty

in this matter. I will gladly coöperate with any who are disposed to take hold of this, and in some way and to some extent we can, if we will, rescue many from ills that would surely come to them.

"There is another and most important field for philanthropic effort. It is the building up of industrial schools. In order to do this, a teacher should be sent whose annual support comes to about $300. She should be supplied with suitable goods to be made up into clothing by the colored girls and women. These for their work receive an allowance of clothes—the balance is given to the destitute, or sold at a low rate to those able to pay. In this way a useful art is taught (cutting and making clothing), well-earned clothing is received, the destitute are provided for and are allowed to buy cheap and excellent garments.

"I consider this work of great importance, but it is almost neglected. Can you not persuade friends to send through the American Missionary Society of New York two or three teachers? This society has quarters and other comforts already provided, and thus there is an economy in sending through it." *

The permanent and only solution of the difficulties that surrounded the ex-slaves became daily clearer to him. In an official report, dated June 30, 1866, speaking of the indignation felt by the Negroes at being ejected from the lands they had squatted upon, which were restored† to their former owners, he writes:

"The freedmen hardly yet comprehend the fact of

*As a result of this letter about 1,000 Negroes were actually placed in families near Cambridge and Boston.

†By act of Congress.

the restoration of lands, and cry out against the injustice of it. They will not as a general rule be permitted to remain, owing largely to their failure to pay rent. . . . Their inability or refusal to pay is due to improvidence, or carelessness, or poverty, or to their not comprehending the fact of restoration. Their minds are in much confusion, and many have been honest in refusing to pay. Many who do not would pay rent if they believed it right to do so. . . . Freedmen as a class are destitute of ambition; their complacency in poverty and filth is a curse; discontent would lead to determined effort and a better life. Many cling to Hampton and stick to Virginia apparently to lay their bones there when they have no more use for them. 'Born and bred here, bound to die here,' is often their supremely stupid and pitiable answer when asked to go elsewhere. Honest efforts on their behalf they interpret into designs to reënslave them. No slave-catcher was ever looked upon with more horror than the clerk who recently sought orphans for the farm-school at Washington. . . . These wild notions are the result of ignorance, to which is mainly due the troubles of the race.

"The education of the freedmen is the great work of the day; it is their only hope, the only power that can lift them up as a people, and I think every encouragement should be given to schools established for their benefit."

His thoughts were the more readily directed toward education for the freedmen because his especial work, that to which General Howard had particularly assigned him, was the study of existing the limited educational opportunities and

observing and reporting concerning the need for others.*

There were already many thriving little schools in his district. Here and there among the pine woods or sandy reaches stood log cabins, whither night after night patient Aunt Dinahs and Uncle Toms, after laboring all day long, went to pore over spelling book and arithmetic; or perhaps some more pretentious building supported by the American Missionary Association, where bright little colored children took their first steps in learning.

The zeal of the ex-slaves for learning was one of the phenomena of the decade following the war, and was one of the tendencies least understood by their northern friends. It was thought to indicate a well-considered wish on their part to supply their own mental deficiencies, while in reality it in general merely indicated the imitative faculty which led them to do those things which they had seen done

*He was required by his position as Superintendent of Schools to state the location of all those within his district, the names of teachers employed in them, the number of pupils in each, the name of the owner of the school-building, and of the educational society by which it was supported. He was further required to make original investigations tending to the establishment of schools under the direct auspices of the Freedmen's Bureau, noting property especially adapted to school use in present or future (in his reports on this matter he saw to it that the Wood farm, where the Hampton Institute was afterward situated, always went to Washington with the endorsement, "Advisable to hold"), and to report what local sentiment existed for or against the education of the freedmen. With a characteristic tendency to state the best side of a subject, he writes that there is in some counties "a growing sentiment in favor of the freedmen's education," and an increasing degree of safety for Negro school-houses and teachers, especially for those of the colored race who seemed to escape the general prejudice against teachers of freedmen.

by their former masters, or perhaps a craving for a hitherto contraband knowledge, though without any sufficient understanding of the nature of it. Many sensible people believed that though the Negroes might have made or might be making political mistakes, they yet realized their own ignorance and inexperience and planned for the overcoming of these faults. It was thought that as material aid seemed to be their greatest present necessity, so education defined as the acquiring of information was their chief future need; those who believed in them were ready to advocate university training for them, while the skeptical avowed that any education was too good for a "nigger." So, in spite of general interest in their mental needs, it came about that their economic and moral faults were in large measure overlooked; and the realization that thrift, energy and high moral standards were of necessity lacking in this lately enslaved race did not force itself upon most of their northern friends.

But among those who came closely in contact with the Negroes were a few who grasped the fact that more important to their present or to their future than charitable relief, or even than education as commonly understood, was training in common morality and habits of industry and foresight. As General Armstrong said:

"The North generally thinks that the great thing is to free the Negro from his former owners; the real thing is to save him from himself. 'Gumption,' per-

ception, guiding instincts rather than a capacity to learn, are the advantages of our more favored race."

He knew of the slave both what the slaveholder knew—that to put a veneer of learning on the plantation Negro would be dangerous nonsense—and what the northern friends of the Negro knew—that as a human being he deserved a fair chance in life. He saw that between the university and no school there was a middle course in which lay the hope of the race.

This clear vision was no doubt due to his early training and observation and to a still persisting sense of aloofness not yet wholly swallowed up in the sense of citizenship in the United States. This feeling of separateness saved him not only from the errors of the partisan, but also from many petty local annoyances to which he might often have been subjected as agent of the Freedmen's Bureau. The Southerners could respect, if they could not love, an official with semi-foreign antecedents, and he was never troubled by the intense and burning local antagonism to his work which made the situation of many of his fellow-workers almost intolerable.

He believed in the Freedmen's Bureau; he was thoroughly loyal to it and to the scheme of reconstruction of which it was a part.

"I believe the continuance of the bureau desirable," he writes officially. "It is a moral power that is

greatly felt; it prevents more than it forcibly suppresses. The freedmen stretch out their arms to the Government not for 'bread and homes' (as has been said), but for help and justice; without the bureau they will receive neither. Every material hope held out by the Government has failed them; they are not what and where they expected to be; they did not fight for this. The bureau is their last hope; were they anything better than suppliants for what mercy they can get they would demand its continuance. For this they universally and earnestly petition."

And again, relative to the whole subject of reconstruction, he writes in a private letter:

"I am delighted with the new reconstruction bill. It is based on justice and truth. I am satisfied that Negro suffrage, if allowed, will become a fact without trouble or noise, and it's coming soon."

These two years of work for the Freedmen's Bureau were difficult and uncertain. In doubt as to its continuance and as yet with no other means of livelihood at hand, Armstrong half expected to be turned adrift as he had been at the close of the war. But his determination, as he wrote at this time, was firm to "stick to the darkies while there is anything to be done for them."

By 1869 the Freedmen's Bureau began to show signs of dissolution. Its courts were mercilessly criticized and at last pronounced unconstitutional. An outcry from all parts of the South arose against its authority. The North had to confess that the

Negro had not made such progress in moral and material conditions as had been expected, and since such improvement was the only excuse for the continuance of the extraordinary powers of the bureau its work came to an end.

But its educational department, which had justified itself by careful and successful work among the freedmen, was continued until 1872, when it, too, was brought to a close. Armstrong worked with this department till the end, carrying it on side by side with other and new activities.

The brief time which Armstrong actually passed in the service of the Freedmen's Bureau is more important to the story of his life by reason of its suggestions of his future work and character than any other equally short space of time. He entered upon it heart-free, care-free, with good spirits oozing from every pore, expressing himself in his private life by joyous hyperbole and unbounded delight in practical jokes, and after passing through a restless transitional period fell in love, found his life-work, and emerged from it a man sobered and settled, full-grown in his mental and moral powers. Of these brief pregnant years he left in his personal letters slight record, though official writings abound, and one must mainly glean from his outer activities what his inner life must have been.

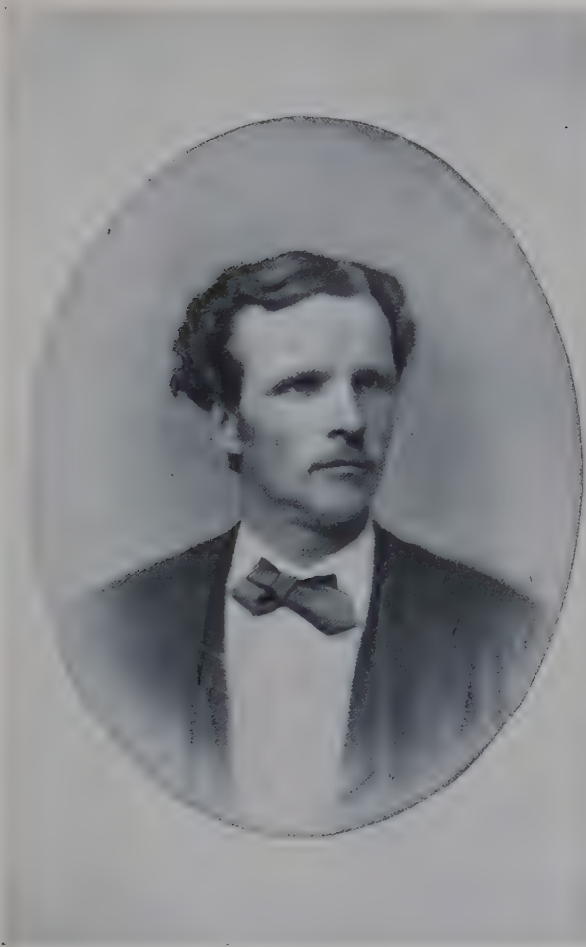
CHAPTER VI

The Beginnings of Hampton

General Armstrong had not been at Hampton more than a twelvemonth before there began to grow in his mind thoughts of an educational institution for the Negroes different from any he saw there, and adapted especially to the needs of the ex-slaves. Such thoughts had long been present in his dreams; he used to relate in after years how, lying on the deck of the transport-ship that was conveying him and his troops to Texas, he saw, as it were in a dream, the Hampton school, completed and much as it later actually became; twice again had come this vision of future achievement, so that he rather decided upon Hampton as a site for such an institution than conceived now for the first time the idea of it.

The peninsula of Old Point was indeed a most favorable situation, both historically and geographically. He wrote later:

"Close at hand the pioneer settlers of America and the first slaves landed on this continent—here Powhatan reigned; here the Indian was first met; here the first Indian child was baptized; here freedom was first given to the slave by General Butler's famous contraband



SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG AT THE AGE OF 28

order; in sight of this shore the battle of the *Monitor* saved the Union and revolutionized naval warfare; here General Grant based the operations of his final campaign. The place was easily accessible by railroad routes to the North and to a population of 2,000,000 of Negroes, the center of great prospective development, and withal a place most healthful and beautiful in situation."

As he meditated upon the development of the plan, the Hilo Manual Labor School for Native Hawaiians,* which he had observed in his boyhood, often occurred to his mind as an example of successful industrial education for an undeveloped race, and he remembered that it turned out men "less brilliant than the advanced schools, but more solid." But he saw that the cases of the Hawaiian and the Negro, though similar, were not parallel, and their needs not identical. There was a small and decadent people: here a large and rapidly growing one, and a people related in a peculiar way to their neighbors, free from the responsibilities of property, yet holding in many places at least potential political power.

Soon after the war, when the southern States made grants of money sufficient to provide a sort of schooling for blacks and whites separately,

* The Hilo school was a boarding-school for Hawaiian boys, who paid their expenses by working in carpentry, housework, gardening, etc., in which they received some slight instruction. It was the only school where the Hawaiians were expected to work with hands as well as heads, and was a marked success. The school still exists.

white teachers from the North took up the work of instructing the Negroes; but their efforts were regarded with disfavor by their southern white neighbors, and they were gradually replaced by Negro teachers, who, as has been said, met with less opposition or were even welcomed.

In Virginia, where the school grants were unusually prompt and large, there was naturally a great and growing demand for young colored people able to teach their race, but for several years this demand met with very inadequate response.

General Armstrong saw this need and set about to supply the public schools of Virginia and the South with teachers—with teachers who should be leaders of their people toward better moral and physical as well as mental habits.

From the first he viewed labor in this institution as a triple force:

(1) In its moral aspect; strengthening the will and thus inculcating a sense of self-reliance and independence, relieving labor from the odium which slavery had cast upon it in the minds of the Negroes, keeping strongly sensual temperaments out of mischief, and giving habits of regularity. "It will make them men and women as nothing else will; it is the only way in which to make them good Christians," he said.

(2) As a means whereby the pupils might earn the education that should fit them to be teachers

and leaders and earn it so far as possible by their own work.

(3) As a means whereby the student might learn while in the school how to support himself after graduation by the work of his hands as well as by his brains, thus affording an example of industry to his people.

To quote from a later writing of his own:

"The thing to be done was clear: to train selected Negro youths who should go out and teach and lead their people, first by example, by getting land and homes; to give them not a dollar that they could earn for themselves; to teach respect for labor, to replace stupid drudgery with skilled hands, and to those ends to build up an industrial system for the sake not only of self-support and intelligent labor, but also for the sake of character."

The idea of combining mental and manual training is to-day made so familiar by a public school system where they are given more and more in conjunction, by the great endowed and the public technical schools, and by a system of State agricultural colleges extending throughout the Union, that the fact of its novelty thirty-two years ago seems strange. But the public mind was not only ignorant of the wise application of the theory, but prejudiced against any trial of it. A certain method of mingling mental and manual work had been, indeed, widely practised, and its results were well known. For some years before Hampton began,

many institutions, among them Mt. Holyoke Seminary for women, Wellesley College, and Oberlin College for both sexes, had required the students to do a certain amount of labor, supposing that their work would help pay the expenses of the institutions. One by one these institutions gave up the experiment, as the pupils, in many cases young girls unused to manual work, under the strain of combined labor and study so often gave out that public opinion would not allow the continuance of the system. Oberlin College (Ohio) was the most prominent example of this, which may be called the "old-fashioned" type of manual-labor schools. Already in 1868 its experiment had failed as a financial venture and had fallen short of the moral results which were hoped for from it. Armstrong knew the work of these schools and the judgment that had been passed on them by public opinion. He saw that the difficulties of combining mental and manual work were both financial and physical; at Oberlin the farmers complained that the students' hearts were in their books, while the teachers lamented that the students were too tired to study; no effective farm-work could be done with such half-hearted labor, while few pupils could with equal zeal study and toil with their hands. He saw that the Negro, inured to toil, tough in physical fiber, and without the highly developed American nervous system, could undertake a daily routine that would kill a

New England girl; he thought, too, that by a certain skilful arrangement of work and study he could avoid the failure of either farm or book work. As the bulk of the Negroes were unfit for any form of industrial work other than farming, they must be placed in a school on a farm where they could plow and plant as they were used to doing. So he planned and thought as he worked in his office or rode on horseback over the sandy roads of his little kingdom during the first year of his stay at Hampton.

In the early part of the year 1867 he wrote to the American Missionary Association, as the greatest financial power interested in Negro education, suggesting that this was the spot for a "permanent and great educational work," and recommending that a valuable estate—"Little Scotland"—comprising 159 acres, fronting on Hampton River and now come on the market, be purchased. The association promptly and cheerfully acceded to his request, and it was decided that a school should be placed there under the auspices of the American Missionary Association.

"Not expecting to have charge, but only to help, I was surprised one day," wrote Armstrong, "to receive a letter from Secretary E. P. Smith, of the American Missionary Association, stating that the man selected for the place had declined and asking if I would take it. I replied, 'Yes.' Till then my future had been blind; it had only been clear that there was a work to be done for the ex-slave and where and how to do it."

Used to planning far in advance of the present, his brain was already actively devising ways in which money to pay for buildings and improvements could be procured. He felt sure that the people of the North would support a wise work for the freedmen; that the American Missionary Association would help him; and that the Freedmen's Bureau, through General Howard, would contribute something from its building fund. He thought, too, that the farm, by raising vegetables for the northern market, would be a source of profit and furnish, besides, almost all the supplies that would be necessary for the school.

These problems of support were still for the future; for the present the full purchase money for the Wood farm—"Little Scotland"—was not yet forthcoming. The American Missionary Association had indeed authorized its purchase, but were not prepared to pay the whole sum, $19,000, and relied on the young man at whose word the purchase was made to help them in raising it. While the matter was thus hanging in the air, a gentleman from Pittsburg, Honorable Josiah King, executor of the Avery estate, which included a legacy of $250,000 for Negro education, at the suggestion of the association paid a visit to Hampton. He was taken to a high building in the vicinity, was struck with the adaptability of the neighborhood to institutional purposes, and shortly paid, through the American Missionary Association, the $10,000

which was still needed. To this visit of Mr. King Armstrong referred in later years as the first step toward the foundation of the Hampton Institute.

The estate just purchased included two good brick buildings on the water-front, the mansion house, where Armstrong had lived since his coming to Hampton, and the flour mill of the plantation, occupied since the war by Negro families. There was upon the estate, back from the water's edge, a great triangular hospital building, formerly a United States hospital, including eight or ten acres of ground within its walls. To the right of the mansion house stretched a salt marsh, ending in a small tidal river and bounded by a sandy knoll on the water-front. Back from the water the bulk of the estate stretched in sandy level, its monotony varied by a few lanes of Negro quarters, dotted with hospital barracks, new and old (one dating even from the Revolutionary War), and bounded on the right by a national cemetery where 6,000 troops were buried. The site had many advantages: the two solid buildings offered housing for classes and teachers, the barracks afforded material that could be used again in construction, and the Hampton River, easily navigable to this point, flowed past the grounds and gave good drainage.

After the purchase of a farm to provide supplies and give opportunity for student labor, the next step was to provide housing for the future pupils, and on October 1, 1867, ground was broken for

the first temporary buildings of the Hampton Institute. The American Missionary Association sent two carpenters to put up some cheap wooden structures, the material to be taken from the old hospital barracks.

Mr. Albert Howe, who was in charge of the construction, writes:

"After some difficulties we put two wards together, making a long one-story building, 250 feet long, with belfry in the middle; next to it a small kitchen, where 'Uncle Tom' cooked for the school. . . . Once General Armstrong, pointing to a knoll (or bluff) where Academic Hall now stands, said: 'That's just the place for an academic building; don't take too much pains with these barracks; three years will demonstrate whether we can make teachers out of these colored people; then we shall make some substantial, lasting buildings. That will be the spot for the Academic Hall, and just here a building for girls and a general dining-room—we'll call it Virginia Hall.' He gave them the very names they bear now. Then he pointed out sites for boys' cottages—all just as you see it now. I sat on a log and looked at him—I thought he was a visionary—it all came to pass."

As early as 1867 Armstrong foresaw the coming need of friends in the North and, granted a brief leave of absence, took several trips thither, quietly getting himself introduced to a few influential people here and there. His work for the Negroes on the peninsula was not unknown, and his project of starting a normal school to train colored teachers

aroused interest wherever it was heard of. In a letter to his mother he thus describes one of these early trips:

"I can't complain of not being appreciated in this country. I wish you could read the warm, friendly words before me of Miss Anna Lowell, sister of the noble General Charles Lowell, who fell in the Shenandoah. We have been many months working together and a true friendship has sprung up—or see the splendid Woolsey family of New York, who have been so kind to me. They are full of interest in my work, are helping me much, and they have a fine army record. Then, if I am not bragging too much, the Emersons of Concord and Higginsons of Cambridge seem to remember me kindly. . . . But enough to show you that I am well guarded, heartily encouraged, most kindly treated, extravagantly complimented, and am now prospering finely with my normal school.

"This being in the world is everything; it gives a man manner, and as Emerson says most truly, 'Manner is power.' My experience shows that in the quickness of modern life is the necessity of instant action in many cases. 'The first step counts,' and the success of the first step depends on how it is done; that is often well or ill, according to manner. The first thing is to be right and true. The second thing is to be transparent, so that the right and true in one shall shine out; but that is manner, and can only be reached by the highest culture."

A flattering offer was made to him in the fall of 1867, which he describes in the same letter:

"But I must tell you about my visit to Washington.

Some days ago I received a telegram from General Howard to report in person to him at once. Ignorant of his intention, I proceeded without delay to his headquarters. It seems he wished me to take charge of the Howard University at Washington—his pet enterprise. There are sixty acres of land, splendidly located, with a commanding view, and two large buildings of artificial stone going up, one for the students' rooms and one for recitation, lecture, library, etc. They will look splendidly. Close by is General Howard's new home. The locality will be the most stylish in the city. The university is intended to be central for (especially, though not solely) the colored youth of the country; to be, if Howard has his way, the largest educational enterprise of its kind (*i.e.*, for freedmen) in the land. At present and for a few years the labor will be all preparatory, as the freed children are not at all advanced. I was desired and very urgently and persistently asked to take hold of this institution, become its head, and make out of it what is possible. I met the trustees twice, looked over the whole ground carefully, and refused for two reasons. First, I was in honor bound to the American Missionary Association that had so warmly supported me here and carried out all my plans. Secondly, I consider that my own enterprise here has better possibilities (is more central with reference to freedmen and has important advantages). . . . Howard is one of the noblest, bravest and kindest of men. He has used me remarkably well."

The letter continues:

"After refusing General Howard's offer, I took care to urge my own scheme; returning through Richmond, had an interview with General Brown, who has given up his

York River affair, has come over to my side and is going to help my institution. We are ahead and alone. The ground is new. The enterprise is as full of bad possibilities as of good ones; most embarrassing conditions will occur from time to time; all is experiment, but all is hopeful. The success of this will be the guarantee of a dozen more like it in the South. I have to face the fact that a manual-labor school *never yet* succeeded in the North, but the powers of prayer and faith are strong—in these we will conquer.

"I am in the midst of the battle now. Worked very hard. Just about to open. Applicants are coming forward encouragingly. Truly the pillar of cloud is before us. Every serious difficulty seems to be removed. What can resist the pressure of steady, energetic pressure, the force of a single right idea pushed month after month in its natural development? If I succeed it will be because of carefully selecting a thing to do and the doing of it. Few men comprehend the deep philosophy of *one-man* power. As a soldier I would always fight on the principle of all great warriors, 'concentration and celerity.' As an educator, as anything, I would apply that same always sound principle, adding to it with reference to enemies or any other obstacle, 'Divide and be conquered.'"

The new school was to open with the spring of 1868, and Armstrong looked forward cheerfully to its financial prospects. General Howard was executing a skilful flank movement in his dealings with Congress for the purpose of adding to the construction fund of the Freedmen's Bureau, which he describes as follows:

"In Washington there was a great population of colored refugees—contrabands, as they were called. They had flocked there as to the source of light and love. They were in a deplorable condition, with almost nothing to eat or wear. Congress gave them soup, now and then clothing. It was a great question what to do with them or for them. I thought it would be best to transport every able-bodied man and woman to some place where they could get labor. I sent off 10,000 from Washington alone.

"Now, though the idea of education or any legislation or work to elevate them did not commend itself to Congress or find any favor, the idea of transporting was immensely popular at once. 'Transportation! Transportation! That's the idea; transport them, of course, anywhere. If to Africa, so much the better.' So then I got large appropriations for that purpose repeatedly, as often as I asked for them, without any trouble, much more than I asked. But a great many were glad to go and pay their own way in part. So I reduced the population sufficiently without the least trouble, and when it was done there remained a very large surplus from the appropriations. I simply asked Congress that I might transfer what funds were left to educational purposes, and the request was granted without much thought of what they were doing. So Hampton got its plum and all the other institutions were started, all as the result of that quiet flanking operation." *

Out of this fund Armstrong expected a grant of $20,000.

As the year 1868 opened he hastened his efforts

* In an address delivered at Hampton Institute in 1889.

to be ready for pupils in April. The one-story barrack, built of old lumber, was completed, the flour mill repaired, and crops planted to mature in June in time for shipment to the northern market.

On April 1, 1868, school was opened with an attendance of fifteen pupils and a teacher and a matron, both employed by the American Missionary Association. A few days after the opening of school, April 5th, he wrote to his mother:

"Things here look well. My machine has just commenced to run. The anxiety and patient effort it has cost are great, but I am now satisfied with it all. . . . The buildings I have erected and repaired are insured for $15,000, less than their real value."

By April 26th there were thirty pupils in the school, doing manual work in the morning and studying in the afternoons and evenings. The boys worked on the farm, the girls at housework; three girls supported themselves by working at a trade learned before coming. The pupils worked in squads, one squad working two days in the week and studying the other four; they were paid for their work, not in cash, but in credit on the books of the school. Armstrong hoped by this plan to obtain sets of men who should be steadily employed at labor and study for regular alternate periods, so that study should not suffer from daily interruption as it did at Oberlin, where part of every day was spent on the farm, and farm work should not

suffer from having laborers whose minds were bent on their books. Students were paid a wage, "up to the point of encouragement," as he said, of 8 cents per hour; whereas at Oberlin only 4 to 7 cents for men and 3 to 4 cents for women was paid. Board was $10 a month, of which half, or in case of extreme want the whole, could be worked out. Those who worked out the entire sum were allowed to attend school at night, thus fitting themselves mentally at the same time as financially to enter the day school later. If a student wished to earn his way by working at some industry other than what was provided by the school, he was allowed to do so. No student was expected to pay for his tuition, a burden which would have been too great for any Negro to carry in those early times. The expense of tuition, estimated at $70 a year, was borne by the management.

With all the care and time incidental to getting this organization in running order, Armstrong was still called on to perform his duties as Freedmen's Bureau agent, for the summer of 1868 was not yet over. In fact, had it not been for the salary received from the Bureau until 1872 he could not have carried on the work of starting Hampton at all through these unsettled years, for he did not take even the salary allowed him out of the school funds, saying:

"Some of my friends don't like this, but they little know the way of successful leadership. The rebel offi-

cers fought without pay, and why should not I in a ten times better cause? . . . I have so far had everything needed for personal comfort, yes, a jolly good time on the whole, with an occasional grind and sometimes an impecunious sensation."

In June, 1878, he wrote:

"However it [the bureau] goes, I am too firmly anchored here to be moved or greatly disappointed by its failure. The chances are that my life-work is here, and I shall not regret it."

He continues:

"It is now spring harvest, and we shall gather $2,000 worth of vegetables which the students have raised. They will be sold in New York and Baltimore. Just sold a pea crop for $900—half of it clear profit."

The establishment of a profitable vegetable farm seems to have been regarded by Armstrong in a double light.

"It is my intention," he wrote, "to wait till another year's results are in and when, if successful, I shall have mastered a highly profitable business, will know all about it, and of course be able to do a second time what I have done once. In that case I shall make an effort to buy and establish a 'truck' farm of my own, thus having something to fall back upon and also being known as a landowner, which will make my position socially far more pleasant and dignified and my political chances greatly improved. Nothing is so bad for one in political life as to be dependent entirely upon his

office. His opponents know it is his weak point and consequently fling his poverty in the faces of his friends, and his friends are apt to exact all sorts of things from him because he is dependent upon their favor. Here in the South, where nearly all northern men are poor, it is a powerful thing, a great foothold, to be supposed even to be worth something."

During the summer of 1868 he made another northern trip by special order of General Howard, in order to visit the agricultural and normal schools of the North. Since his last trip his position had become more assured, and he was recognized as an official representative of the educational work done by the Freedmen's Bureau and by the American Missionary Association.

He felt while on this trip how dear to him the work at Hampton was becoming, full of perplexity though it often was. He writes from Boston:

"I have been over the 'Athens' but wouldn't live here for anything. I am glad I'm on the outposts doing frontier duty and pioneer work, for the South is a heathen land and Hampton is on the borders thereof. I see my whole nature calls me to the work that is done there—to lay foundations strong and not do frescoes and fancy work."

The fall term opened prosperously. A few days after its beginning he wrote:

"This is no easy machine to run wisely, rightly. The darkies are so full of human nature and have to

be most carefully watched over. They are apt to be possessed with strange notions. To simply control them is one thing, but to educate, to draw them out, to develop the germ of good possibilities into firm fruition, requires the utmost care. Eternal vigilance will be the price of success. A very good and noble lady, Mrs. Griggs, of New York, has just given $1,000 to the Institute. Work is going ahead. I have just secured for our farm work an old hospital worth several hundred dollars. . . . I am driving things ahead as fast as possible and hope with a well-appointed farm next year to make good profits. I have just been refitting our home.* This house is a brick thing, rather ungainly from the exterior, but within it is quite pleasant and comfortable since the repairs. Outside there is a wide piazza, about fourteen feet wide and forty feet long, from which there is a pleasant view and where it is pleasant to promenade."

The late fall and early winter were spent in the search for a farmer who should be scientific enough to command respect and practical enough to make the farm profitable. The farm was at that time considered the most completely appointed in the State, and Armstrong was ambitious to make it the best and most scientifically managed in the South. He looked as far north as New Jersey for his man, writing:

"This is an anxious sort of a trip for me, because so much—our whole financial success—depends on my choice of the right man. I only now begin to compre-

*Referring to the old mansion house, where he lived and which he expected to make his permanent home.

hend the difficulty of getting the right men for this work. I see why most institutions and enterprises fail. There are lots of men, but few who are good for anything. Many men can talk, can shine—few can do things."

He succeeded in finding the right man, who absolutely refused his offer, but eventually came to Hampton—a change of heart not at all uncommon under Armstrong's magnetic determination to win his chosen assistants.

The year 1869 proved to be a most eventful one. Armstrong had determined on the erection of an expensive and elaborate brick building for the class work at Hampton, to be called Academic Hall. He received from General Howard, as he had hoped, the sum of $20,000 toward it, and in order that the structure might be a tasteful one secured the services of Richard M. Hunt as architect. The bricks were to be made on the grounds, an industry which was soon in full operation, the students making several thousand bricks a day. He told the American Missionary Association that he would not depend on them for a cent of the money for its erection, and looked forward to a struggle to raise the $13,000 which, with the $20,000 already secured, would, he thought, cover the cost.

September 20th he wrote:

"This has been an interesting day. The mason from New York has come and there is the bustle of prepara-

ACADEMIC HALL - ERECTED 1869 AND DESTROYED BY FIRE, NOV. 9, 1879

tion. To-morrow the first bricks are to be laid. Between them and the last—between the first stroke of the mason's trowel and the last—what a world of anxiety and labor there will be! The erecting of this building is the most responsible and conspicuous and fateful single executive act of my life. The failure of it would be a crushing blow to body and mind. I could not bear failure. The success of it will be only an inspiration to other fields of effort, in what directions I cannot tell, but they will be opened when it is time to enter them. To-day two more masons went to work and there are now twelve of them laying bricks. We put up about 20,000 bricks a day. Truly they say the building ground is a busy place. I only pay $3 a day, and, what is unknown in this country, I pay white and black just the same when the work is the same. It pleases the darkies, but the white masons don't like it much. They have an idea that the institute is rich and think it hard if we don't give them more than anybody else. I have to be supremely indifferent and tell them to go wherever I like, though I should hate to have them leave. Half colored and half white is the character of my gang; they get along in millennial peace. Backy* and I rather enjoy the plotting of these fellows; they can't get very far ahead of us.

"Two hundred and fifty barrels of cement arrived from New York this morning and had to be unloaded at our wharf. What a singular providence it is that we have here everything we need! This wharf, that is of such service and economy to us, was built just at the close of the war for the purpose of landing wounded soldiers more conveniently and comfortably, but was never quite completed. It is just what we want."

*His brother Baxter.

An incident in connection with the erection of Academic Hall is recorded by Doctor Strieby, the senior secretary of the American Missionary Association. He and several other men of influence and character, among them Doctor Mark Hopkins, the venerable president of Williams College, and General Garfield, were invited to visit Hampton in July, 1869, to consult with General Armstrong about his plans and about the situation of the new building. Most of them thought that the purchase of the Chesapeake Female Seminary (now the main building of the Veterans' Home at Hampton), would be wiser than the erection of a new building, with all the risks involved. Armstrong, however, opposed this plan strongly, fearing the traces of disease that might linger in the building as a heritage from its use as a hospital in war time, and perceiving that the level flats stretching along its waterfront would make drainage difficult and expensive.

"We all met on the veranda of the General's house," says Doctor Strieby. "We looked the matter over. I said, 'That is the thing to do—to buy the seminary building.' General Armstrong was inflexibly opposed to it (for one reason that it would prevent the erection of a more suitable and lasting building). At last President Mark Hopkins took me to one side and said, 'We had better let this young man have his way.' And we did."

So the building was placed where Armstrong had determined, some two years before, that it

should be placed, and by the commencement of the fall term of 1870 was in order for use.

The letters to his mother grew briefer and less frequent from this time, the beginning of his active work at Hampton; but letters to a new correspondent give for a time in equal detail his thoughts and hopes for his work. The recipient of these confidences was Miss Emma Dean Walker, of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, to whom he was married in October, 1869. Hereafter for their married life of nine years the deepest expressions of thought and feeling are to be found in his letters to her.

Emma Walker was a young girl of rare charm of person and character, and brought to her new home at Hampton a spirit of devotion to her husband's ideals which was of inestimable delight to him. A frail physique prevented active service on her part, and they were constantly separated, both by the needs of the Hampton school for money and by her own wanderings in search of health. But in spite of drawbacks the married life of these two, united by a singularly close devotion to each other and to high ideals of unselfish living, was full of sympathy and joy.

Having now a home and family, Armstrong's thoughts turned longingly sometimes toward the possibility of securing a more fixed income and position. He considered running for Congress, but soon gave up definitely and permanently ideas of

a political advancement, writing to his mother as follows:

"I have concluded to give up all Congressional plans and to stick to my work here. This is not because my political chances are not good. They are, I suppose, excellent; but I like less and less this breaking off one thing and going into another, and besides the tendencies and dangers of politics I greatly fear. I am more and more disgusted with all kinds of public life. There's more worry and bother about it than the positions are worth. It has ceased to attract."

He applied during the fall for the position of State assessor of taxes, to which a good salary was attached, but failed to get it. The conclusion must have forced itself upon him that the work he had chosen was his for better or worse, and was, moreover, a jealous mistress, to be cherished to the exclusion of all other interests.

The final step in the beginnings of Hampton, and one which marked the opening of a new period in its development, was an act passed by the General Assembly of Virginia June 4, 1870, incorporating the "Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, for the instruction of youth in the various common schools, academic and industrial branches, the best methods of teaching same and best mode of practical industry in its application to agriculture and the mechanic arts."

The breadth of scope shown by this charter, including every race, industry and method, indi-

cates clearly that the founder realized the possibilities of his school and wished to hamper its future by no limitations. But the school was not incorporated by the Virginia Legislature without considerable discussion, and many were the busy days passed by Armstrong that spring of 1870 in the hot Richmond lobbies, using his persuasive powers on the conservative ex-Confederates. It is greatly to the credit of his eloquence, and a tribute also to their real liberality, that they should have passed such an act at a time when hot passions still seethed about every southern legislative hall.

April 30, 1870, he wrote to his friend and adviser, General J. F. B. Marshall, who soon became treasurer of the Hampton school:

"Our act has not yet passed the House. There has been trouble in the matter of making 'no distinction of color.' The conservatives are opposed to such a liberal basis. They will consent to incorporate 'without distinction of color' only on the ground that a large portion of the money already granted to this intitute has been given on express condition that all should be admitted without distinction of color. I have been compelled to obtain papers to prove this fact —have just done so, and probably we'll be all right shortly."

It was an early dream of his, never realized except in the case of one struggling family of poor whites to whom he gave shelter and a job, that he could directly help the whites of the South by giving

them an industrial education at Hampton. He foresaw the coming lack among them of skilled labor, saying mournfully, "The whites have no apprentices!" and sincerely wished to aid them in their economic distress.

PART II
ACCOMPLISHMENT

GENERAL ARMSTRONG—1880

CHAPTER VII

At Hampton. 1870–1890

The story of the ensuing twenty years, 1870–1890, is a story of struggle for the existence and growth of the Hampton school. Of this period there is little to be learned from Armstrong's personal letters; his extended activity left him no time for the leisurely letter writing of earlier years. In formal reports and public speeches, and in a few letters that touch slightly on the current events of his life, are to be found indications of his point of view on various matters; but of the story of his life as told in his own words there is no record. One must look rather at the record of the development of Hampton school—study the spirit that formed it or trace in the North the creation of a public sentiment in favor of Negro industrial education, and try to re-create from the memories of friends the personality that, more than all his eloquence, won him a hearing in the busy northern world.

The spirit of school life at Hampton is expressed in a few words which he spoke in 1891 at an anniversary of his old school in the Hawaiian Islands:

"It remains to make the best of things. Those who

are hopeless disarm themselves, and may as well go to the rear; men and women of faith, optimists, to the front. This is the Christian era. '*In hoc signo vinces*' is the motto of the faithful; they are not afraid. But mere optimism is stupid; sanctified common sense is the force that counts. Work for God and man is full of detail. It needs organization, requires subordination, sometimes painful holding of the tongue; gabble and gossip, even that of the pious, is one of the most fatal devices of the evil one; the friction and fuss in God's army does much to defeat it. Many people are good, but good for nothing. Working together is as important as working at all."

The fact that General Armstrong incorporated his first annual report to the trustees in a report of twenty years later, with the comment that he would hardly change a word of it for present or future use, is significant. Many men start with a conception of their work which is modified by circumstances and experience; but Armstrong adhered to the same plan for the entire length of his active life, and his reports and letters might, but for the record of events of the year—this building completed, that needed—be interchanged, putting the first last and the last first. So, too, his views on Negro affairs, once stated, remain unchanged, for it could be said of the Negro throughout this period that "in spite of material and intellectual advances, his deficiencies of character are worse for him and for the world than his mere ignorance." *

* First annual report to trustees, 1870.

Most of the students at Hampton for this term of years came from working people who were more ambitious for their children than for themselves. Although many of these young men and women were born after slavery was past, their traditions were of slavery; and while they were well meaning and prepared to work if they had to, and while they practised the forms of Christianity, they possessed but little comprehension of the real teachings of Christ, and were ignorant alike of the care of body and mind. Merry of temperament, care did not long trouble their breasts; seeking the light with earnestness, they had to contend against the bad influences of inheritance and lack of training. No one believed in them, and they did not believe in themselves; they needed an accession of self-respect, and to stimulate this quality General Armstrong's first efforts were directed.

Partly for this purpose and partly in order to provide for permanence and future growth, the first buildings at Hampton were costly and imposing brick structures. The first building, Academic Hall, stood alone on a sandy knoll by the water, with boys' dormitories in the top and rooms for recitations occupying the body of the building. This building, which Armstrong spoke of as "my monument as much as anybody's," rose above the salt marshes and flats of that desolate region like a monument indeed.

It was soon followed by a second and larger

building, made necessary by the rapid increase in the number of pupils and the rapid expansion of the industrial idea.

This second building, costing $76,000, was begun when but $2,000 was on hand; but General Armstrong was confident that the people would sustain a wise work for the freedmen if they could feel that real enterprise and devotion were behind the plea which he made to them; he had a hole dug, piled the bricks and lumber about it, built the foundation, had the corner-stone ready to be laid, and invited a large party from New York and Boston to come down and visit the "mute appeal." * As a result of his efforts, money came with which to begin the erection of the building, and though the panic of 1873 intervened between the beginning and the completion of the building, he was able, through the efforts of the "Hampton Singers," who "sung up" its brick walls with true enthusiasm for the cause, to complete it without running into debt.

Virginia Hall was a dignified building, of a capacity far beyond the actual needs of the Hampton school as it was at that time. Some people doubted the wisdom of erecting such an expensive and comparatively elaborate structure for the instruction of the proverbially careless, unappreciative Negroes, who were supposed to be trained merely as teachers for primary schools; the expenditure of $76,000 for such

*As he afterward laughingly called a hole dug for the purpose of dumbly begging aid.

VIRGINIA HALL—ERECTED 1872

a purpose seemed a disproportionate outlay. Armstrong defended his course by showing how economically in such a building the various functions assigned to it could be carried on. "Serving the cause by its well-arranged and commodious interior, containing no lot of waste room," he said. Scientific cooking and heating were valuable object lessons for boys and girls just out of a log cabin. He pointed out that a less tasteful and imposing structure would have failed to awaken among the graduates so much pride in their *Alma Mater*, and that the reputation and influence of the school, both among its white and its black neighbors, would be greatly increased by the erection of a building of which every one could be proud. When completed, the lofty towers of Virginia Hall, showing far above any building in the vicinity, seen for miles over the low-lying country by the dwellers in hundreds of squalid and hopeless Negro homes and by hundreds of oystermen on the waters of Chesapeake Bay, stood for far more than the fact that a normal school for Negro youths was situated there; it stood for the faith in their race that was held by one man who dared to risk financial reputation as well as social position in their behalf.

Although no expense was spared to make the buildings permanent and commanding, the furnishings of the room within were simple to plainness. "Costly buildings stimulate self-respect; but beds, furniture and clothing are good but simple, no

better than what they can, by their own industry, get at home." To this rule Armstrong always adhered, providing male students with home-made straw mattresses, and all with such simple furnishing that any of it could have been made at his own home by either boy or girl. The same idea was carried out in regard to food; accustomed at home to "hog and hominy," this or its equivalent was their fare at school, though he took care that it should be properly cooked and served.

After the erection of Virginia Hall other buildings followed in rapid succession, so that during this period the material growth of the school was its most marked characteristic. But in Armstrong's thought the heart of all his work was the arrangement of an effective, practical routine of hand and head work, the preservation of such an atmosphere of energy and devotion that no student could fail to be impressed by it.

The routine planned in 1870 and continued for twenty years practically unchanged was simple. Beginning an hour before daybreak in winter, a twelve-hour day of work, study and military drill, with but a few minutes for daily recreation, left little time for self-indulgence and indolence. "There is little mischief done where there is no time for it; activity is a purifier," said General Armstrong. Coeducation, too, a part of the Hampton scheme, which General Armstrong considered second only to manual labor as an educational force for the

Negro, was only made possible by this very arduous routine. "Its success," he writes, "is assured by incessant varied activity of mind and body, with proper relaxation and amusement in an atmosphere of Christian influence and sympathy."

It was a test of physique and endurance in which few white men and women could have come out victorious. And herein lay Armstrong's audacity and the secret of his success, that he had dared to apply it to the indolent Negro; seeing in his inherited reserve of physical endurance and patience to plod on toward a far-away goal, in his docile disposition which enabled him to accept a hard-and-fast routine without revolt, qualities which fitted him for constant application and continuous effort at high tension.

General Armstrong met his pupils regularly and often, both in public and private. If any had a "grievance," as he himself would say, or was dissatisfied with work or surroundings, he had but to ask in order to see "the General," as Armstrong was commonly called by his pupils. He was accessible to all, sitting in the little box of a room that served him for many years as an office, where he received complaints and requests and discharged them with quick comprehension of the point and a ready, keen answer that closed the discussion. Many of his pupils will remember him thus seated, his pen in his hand, his piercing eyes looking out over glasses, a straight figure instinct with life.

He knew how to be severe, having no patience

with lying or laziness. "There is no place for a lazy man in this world or the next," he said. But a kindly humor lurked in his eyes, and he never turned a culprit away without the sense that he was understood and had been fairly treated. Words that he sometimes used, whether quoted or original, described his attitude toward his pupils: "Human, therefore imperfect; human, therefore capable of improvement."

For Negroes and Indians with their shadowed past he had a pity and long suffering that enabled him to bear their failings with philosophy and kept him from impatience under disappointment. Once, when a promising pupil unexpectedly went to the bad, he said: "If we were not working for two hundred years hence, this might be discouraging." Through all discipline ran his firm military methods; he was severe toward an offense, but when the punishment was over he bore no ill will toward the offender—a method well adapted to increase in the suspicious natures of the Negro and Indian that confidence in him which they already felt.

He met some of his pupils weekly in the class-room, instructing them in his favorite study of moral philosophy, as it was then called, using for a text-book Doctor Hopkins's "Outline Study of Man." It was a great pleasure and relaxation to him in the midst of his prosaic daily routine to turn to these larger aspects of man, his possibilities and his destiny, which were associated with the

leader of his youth and with the quiet seclusion of his college days. He used Doctor Hopkins's methods in conducting a class, stimulating by quick questions and witty rejoinder the interest and mental activity of his scholars. Like Doctor Hopkins, he believed that the class-room should be a jolly place, and used to say that no recitation was complete without at least one good laugh. "Laughter makes sport of work," he said. While his military manner and stern eye made him feared by many in the class-room, it soon became evident to the most timid, from his patience in waiting for an answer or explaining details to the slow, that he was rather to be loved than feared. As he advanced in years a brusque manner grew upon him, which often scared the timid, both subordinates and pupils, but in the end they all understood his never-failing patience and love.

One who would see him in his most usual and interesting relation to his pupils, however, must picture him as addressing them nightly or weekly from the central platform of a large upper room known as the chapel, with seats arranged in tiers, so that one addressing the audience could hold every eye, where seven hundred men and women, Indian, Negro and white, were gathered to listen to him. On such occasions he felt and appeared like a general taking command of his little army, an army organized to fight vice and ignorance, against which he stood forth as if they had been foes of

flesh and blood. It was his custom to hold by rapid question and answer, as in his class-room, the attention of his childlike audience.

An excellent example of his method of address is the following, delivered shortly before his death in 1893:

"Spend your life in doing what you can well. If you can teach, teach. If you can't teach, but can cook well, do that. If a man can black boots better than anything else, what had he better do? Black boots. [Laughter.] Yes, and if a girl can make an excellent nurse, and do that better than anything else, what had she better do? Nurse. Yes, she can do great good that way in taking care of the sick and suffering. Some of our girls have done great good already in that way. Do what you can do well and people will respect it and respect you. That is what the world wants of every one. It is a great thing in life to find out what you can do well. If a man can't do anything well, what's the matter with him? Lazy! Yes, that's it. A lazy man can't do anything well and no one wants him around. God didn't make the world for lazy people.

"The Senior Class is soon to go out. You must expect to teach, and you can teach well, can't you? You must try, at any rate. If after trying you find you can't, then do something else that you can do; but give it a fair trial. This school is a school to train teachers. It is bound to turn out teachers. It must be honest. A great deal of money is given and spent for this object, so we must honestly carry it out.

"We send out the Middle Class, too, to teach a year before they take the Senior studies. How many are in the Middle Class now? Seventy-five. And how

many are expecting to teach? [All hands went up.] All. That's good. Now I will ask some of the Seniors to say what their year out teaching did for them. . . . Go out from here to fight against sin. Fight the devil. Fight against badness, evil and ignorance, disease, bad cooking. Help your people in teaching, in care of the sick, in improving land, in making better homes. Do what you can do well, and do it as well as you can."

Many of these talks bore a deep religious impress, and many young men and women date from them their first impulse toward a true Christian life. Armstrong's nature was so deeply ingrained with the sense of the presence of a living God that his slightest word on spiritual themes carried peculiar weight. There was no pupil present who did not gain from Armstrong an illuminating sense of the value of his own petty routine of work, who did not feel that his daily tasks were made interesting because they were part of a large, comprehensible plan, made worth while because behind them all lay Armstrong's immovable faith in him. There was no Negro, however ignorant or dull, who did not at times catch a glimpse of this inspiring vision of his possibilities and, if he remained long under the influence of it, become moved into acceptance of it.

Though General Armstrong often expressed himself unconventionally when talking with his personal friends on religious matters, in his work he adhered closely to the customary forms of religious expression.

He always bore in mind where his pupils came from and to what manner of life they were going, and that what they carried away with them must be not only genuine, but simple and easily grasped by their neighbors. He saw that they must not be thrown out of sympathy with what was good in the methods in vogue about them, and never spoke in a way calculated to disturb the simple religious convictions of his audience. Regarding religious forms he once said: "They're imperfect enough, but they are the best we've got." He was urgent in his demands on the students to become Christians while at Hampton, saying that if they did not then do so they never would. He often spoke at prayer meetings held by the students, encouraging a free, genuine expression of religious feeling, but cutting ruthlessly off long-winded remarks and expressions savoring of cant. In the early days of the school, when it was still in the leading-strings of the American Missionary Association, the question of "orthodox or non-orthodox," even to the point of receiving Unitarian money, * was a live one. He answered it in his own direct way, and his words were as true in 1890 as when they were written in 1870:

"The institute must have a positive character. It has! It is orthodox and that's the end of it, although I confess I never told the school it was so, and I don't believe one of our pupils knows what 'orthodox' means.

*The school received for many years a large part of its income from Unitarian sources.

We mean to teach the precepts of Jesus Christ, accepting them as inspired and as recorded in the Bible."

How truly he believed in sincere manifestations of religious feeling may be seen in the following letter written to a friend in 1883:

"There is now in the school the deepest and most intense religious feeling I ever knew. We have instead of evening prayers daily meetings of about half an hour, in which the students in quick succession rise for a few words of experience or prayer. In all the five hundred who are present there is no excitement. It is like a Quaker meeting, so quiet is it. All speak in an undertone. There is a sense of the divine presence in our midst, yet these four hundred wild, passionate Negro hearts, stirred to their depth, make no noise. A few sobs have been heard. The stillness is only broken by earnest, cheerful verses of hymns sung from time to time. The most touching of all are the few-months-ago-wild Indians who speak a few words in broken English or a prayer in the Dakota language. . . . Routine work and study go on. The school work is done in better temper and style than ever."

A pupil writes of Armstrong's relations with his students:

"I loved to go to evening prayers to listen to his talks and his prayers for us during the night and for the work he was doing. General Armstrong always spoke very fast, but when he prayed it was slow and deliberate. I did always enjoy his Sunday evening talks. I never once grew tired of hearing him. He would often say

to those who were sleepy, 'Sleep on, I don't mind; you need plenty of sleep. I will talk to those awake.' When the hour came to dismiss us, he would rouse us by having us sing a very lively song."

He felt the importance of keeping close relations with the graduates and ex-students of the Hampton school, in order that they might retain and be helped by the impressions received at Hampton. He said:

"Hampton is a school of civilization meant to bear directly as a directive, inspiring force on these two races, not only through those whom it sends out, but indirectly by its influence on other institutions for these races which to some degree look to it for example and lessons."

He regarded these graduate workers as young lieutenants in the field, fighting their first fight in command of troops:

"There is a certain spirit of conquest in this work that I like. We have lots of strong places to take and we have the force to do it. To be bold and honest and work the darkey into shape and keep the white man in good humor is not very easy, but it can be done."

Many of his epigrammatic remarks remained firmly fixed in their minds. Years after his death, the students at Hampton sometimes held an evening of quotations from his words, and many recalled them with great exactness. One writes:

"I shall always remember his saying, 'Help your people by giving them what has been given to you.' 'Doing what can't be done is the glory of living.'"

This attitude of cheerful optimism was the only one which could have roused the Negro to effort and self-respect. General Armstrong never spoke much of heredity, but always of the power of surroundings.

"Success is not a matter of conditions, but rather of predestinations," he said; "not but what heredity is a power in life, but that it is secondary decidedly to the surroundings of a man. This fact is not appreciated as it should be."

This hopeful tone pervaded every phase of Armstrong's thought. "Hopeless ones are only grave-diggers for themselves and the rest." He once sprang up at a meeting at Lake Mohonk, New York, when an objection was made that a certain course approved by him was "impossible." "What are Christians put into the world for but to do the impossible in the strength of God?" he exclaimed. This sentiment he commonly expressed in the following story—for feeling and fun played twin parts in his conversation:

"Once there was a woodchuck. . . . Now, woodchucks can't climb trees. Well, this woodchuck was chased by a dog and came to a tree. He knew that if he could get up this tree the dog could not catch him. Now, woodchucks can't climb trees, but he had to, so he did."

Increasingly up to 1878, the year of the death of his wife, to a somewhat less extent after that date, General Armstrong was the center of the social life at the Hampton school. The institution formed a curious little isolated community, with its four or five hundred blacks, its group of Indians, and dominant circle of whites, mostly women. Sufficient in itself socially this circle had to be, for there was no social life open to it outside of its own limits. When work was over, General Armstrong was the first to propose boating or driving excursions, picnics, and expeditions of all kinds, as if he had nothing else to attend to.

"I remember," writes a friend, "however late in the evening it was, he would be at our doorsteps and full of some plan, no matter what trouble to himself was involved. Once we took the boat to Yorktown early in the morning. He was desirous of getting up an all-night excursion, and was ready to send blankets and mattresses anywhere."

The old "brick thing" of a house, the mansion house of the Wood farm, to which he referred in a letter written in 1868, was gradually made over into an attractive and unique home. In the rear of the solid brick and stucco of the original structure, garlanded with ivies and honeysuckle and opening its ample rooms in generous hospitality, was a series of heterogeneous wooden additions consecrated to various and ever-changing uses; at one time, when the usual recitation building had been burned, the

MANSION HOUSE IN 1872—GENERAL ARMSTRONG'S HOME

Foundations of Virginia Hall to the right

entire house became a study-hall, with blackboards perched in the parlors and bulletins posted in the corridors. General Armstrong's favorite room was a little bay-windowed study, where, surrounded by the books of his choice and pictures of his Hawaiian home, he found occasional rest. Sometimes, when elm and honeysuckle were in leaf and flower beside the water, the old house swarmed with Commencement guests, who sipped lemonade on its piazza and perhaps looked curiously at the shabby exterior, with its discolored walls and odd climax in the shape of a half-crumbling greenhouse at one end. One said: "Everything seems to be in good repair but the General's house." In 1886 a sum was reluctantly accepted by Armstrong for the rehabilitation of it. He never thought of a house except as a shelter from the weather, where you could meet your friends and where any one who needed it could find shelter and hospitality.

During the brief hours spent at home he was often silent and absorbed, and anything that was unpleasant or exciting troubled him, especially discussion, or "debating," as he called it. Music was a great delight to him in its simpler forms, becoming fatiguing when more complex. He played a little on the flute, but never having time to practise upon it, strove vainly thus to express his musical aspirations. His taste for drawing, which might with training have developed into a real pleasure and resource to him, was used only in comic illustrations in letters

to his children. Reading was the only resource to which in his home life, with its slight opportunities for relaxation, he could turn. As evening drew on he loved to ask a few friends to his house, where, seated in his old green-velvet arm-chair, he would read in his dramatic way some poems of Browning, "Lord Clive," or "Martin Relph," or perhaps a Latin ode or hymn—"Dies Iræ" was a favorite; perhaps some simple poem of nature, as Bryant's "Green River." Browning was during his latter years his prime favorite among poets.

He was a great reader, and his table was heaped with English and American books and magazines bearing on the Negro, on Indian education or the general aspect of some question of humanitarian science; a book of travel or exploration, like Stanley's "Darkest Africa," interested and, he said, helped him, because it was the picture of a man overcoming difficulties. He deeply enjoyed Hughes's "Life of Livingstone," partly for the same reason, partly because it shed light on the home and habits of the Negro race in Africa.

He had no interest in the detail of what is commonly called "science," but was glad to know of anything that promised relief or benefit to man. It was a great grief to him that he could find no time for general literary and classical culture. "Philanthropy is the thief of time," he used to say. As early as 1870, in a letter to his wife, he said:

MANSION HOUSE AFTER IMPROVEMENTS IN 1886

"I hope when I go to you to do a good deal of reading and freshen up myself somewhat in the classics; this rusting out is dreadful; it is wearing out. I wish I could lay aside human nature as one does a cloak and gently browse awhile in green pastures."

But his interest in all matters pertaining to the welfare of man reached beyond the limit which his brief leisure for reading allowed. He was a subscriber for years to the National Divorce Reform League, was interested in the industrial problems of India, in the civilization of Africa, and most of all in prison reform. He writes:

"If I shall ever have work or influence in the South for anything beyond schools, it shall be for prison reform. That has been in my thought for years. I long for a chance to take hold, but it will all come out all right."

His home might have been devoid of lightness but that it was illuminated by a perennial love of fun, a love of fun which introduced the "Presbyterian war-dance" and "puss in the corner" among the very elect. The "war-dance" was a "grand right and left" danced to the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and gradually growing faster and faster till every one was too breathless to sing. How many there are who can recall the gray-haired leader rushing the dancers on and calling "Faster! Faster!" or scampering across the room or lawn chased by some small boy whose young legs perforce gained

the race. He liked to tell his children, when an organ-grinder went by with his monkey, that the monkey hired the organ-grinder by the month to carry him round and play for him, and that you could tell it must be so, because the man walked in the dust and heat and carried the monkey sitting with his legs crossed, and handsomely dressed at ease on top of the organ. An eclipse of the sun which he saw in New York he describes as follows:

"Did I mention the eclipse? It passed off creditably as seen through a piece of smoked glass which I bought of a boy in the streets for ten cents. It amounted to this, that the sun charged ten cents for every spectator and must have made a good deal of money out of it, unless the wretches who sold the glass failed to 'go snacks' with his Imperial Majesty the sun. If so, there will not be another eclipse soon."

The confiding belief of his little girls in these fables was a source of great delight to him. Indeed, his relation with them was for many years the greatest pleasure of his lonely life. While they were still small girls he wrote constantly to them, often in a series of story-letters in which cats, dogs, missionaries and good and bad boys and girls figure in delightful profusion, and in which the good are rewarded and the wicked punished with a fidelity peculiar to fiction.

Fortunately for the permanence of his influence on young colored men and women, he did not

forget that they were but boys and girls and must have healthy fun and recreation as much as his own children:

"A social influence over them is all-important, I think. Whatever you do, get hold of their amusements; supply something that will delight them. I am convinced of the necessity of organizing pleasure as well as religion in order to sustain Christian morality. Surrounding influences are, on the human side, the great uplifting power. The power of it is marvelous, especially on the moral character. Anything short of personal knowledge of and influence over them amounts to little. . . . Here once in a while we play games, teachers always present; the whole thing kept well in hand, limited to an hour. The whole matter is talked frankly and freely over with students, and very bright, happy times through ten years' experience shows it to be wise for us. . . . Efforts on the social side may seem discouraging, but touch and sympathy with natives * must be kept up, if it *is* hard work. It will pay when trouble comes."

One part of his house was built in his last years for the express purpose of recreation, both of pupils and of teachers. He did not live to organize his favorite games there, but the room, under the name of *the recreation room*, remains as a reminder of his insistence upon the importance of healthy play for all.

His teachers discussed frankly with him plans for the growth of the school. In these discussions he

* Spoken of Hawaiians, but applied equally to Negroes.

was singularly open to suggestion, and never seemed to regard the school as his own, but rather as a trust which he held for the nation. Every new idea he listened to with eagerness and incorporated in his work if there was any good in it. It was his theory that the institution was a kind of experiment station where the worth of various theories could be proved. It is an instance of his amenableness to suggestion that he often invited a free written expression of opinion from subordinates in regard to their departments, though keeping his own counsel in regard to the acceptance of advice:

"I have seldom followed advice implicitly, which is sometimes the best and sometimes the worst thing in the world, according to the good sense of the giver, but it has been of unspeakable value as stimulating thought and has led to much change of direction; one 'caroms' on it, as one billiard ball does on another." *

It will readily be seen that much of his success in dealing with an impressionable race like the Negro lay in his selection of assistants. He believed that most of the teachers engaged in preparing pupils for teaching in the public schools should be women, as he thought their influence over the blacks of a more refining nature than that of men, so that for many years most of his assistants were women. One who was closely and for a long time associated with him writes:

*Address at Hawaiian Islands, 1891.

"General Armstrong had strong convictions in regard to 'culture' training for teachers; for this reason he rather leaned toward college-trained teachers, or women of broad culture coming from families like the B——s [a well-known family of inherited intellectual ability]. He felt that the lack of knowledge in theory and practice which these teachers often show was offset by their superior mental culture. He was often heard to say that such students as those at Hampton needed to be surrounded by ladies and gentlemen of culture; that the Negro was quick to recognize 'de quality.' "

In his eagerness to help the unfortunate wherever they were he sometimes invited persons in the condition known as "down on their luck" to become teachers at Hampton, expecting, it would seem, that as the inspiration from contact with so great a cause came upon them, the faults which had brought them to this condition would be remedied. One or two of these persons were usually to be found at Hampton occupied in some branch of work devised especially for them, oddly incongruous elements, but not disloyal to the genuine kindness which brought them there. From his earliest to his last days Armstrong's sun rose alike upon the evil and the good; on the whole, however, he gathered together a strong body of teachers, remarkably successful in working together.

" In our associated life at Hampton, of all things we wish charity and consideration for each other. Hasty and sharp expressions when we differ are most mis-

chievous; good temperament is the great thing to secure unity and a never-broken mutual coöperation in making our work as strong and perfect as possible."

Having in mind always, like another great teacher, Thomas Arnold, that education which is not moral and spiritual is worse than no education, he yet bound his teachers to no creed. Speaking of one's coming, he said:

"She need not be 'orthodox,' but simply loyal to the school as it is and do the best she can. A fine, well-developed personality, along with skill in teaching, makes, I think, an ideal teacher, but they do not often go together."

He eagerly seized on people whom he thought adapted to Hampton, and drew them there often against pressure from their homes, or even against their own previous inclination; for as he said, "I want people whom everybody else wants." When they were there he tried to make them happy, encouraging any reasonable taste or hobby in them, or urging them to develop new lines of work at Hampton; for he valued the faculty of originality in subordinates as a sign of potential influence and innate power. Yet, although intending to allow full scope for the individuality of each teacher, he was unable to avoid impressing his own marked characteristics upon them to some extent; a fact to which is due largely the impression of unity between the man and his work which was made on every visitor.

His ideal of the scope of a teacher's work was high:

"The country and people must be studied by them as none of us are able to do. Only by touching the people he is working for can a teacher get the true range and do his best work."

He believed that the study of man, the conditions of civilization, of history and the laws of development were necessary in order to make a successful teacher of the Negro and Indian races.

"Many teachers seem to me," he said, "to have disproportionate ideas of the forces that make up man. . . . There is plenty of study of methods, not enough of study of men or of the problems of life."

He considered the gain to the teacher to be equal to the gain to the pupil at Hampton:

"We are forced to do work that by bringing us more directly into the line of God's providence gives us a drill that is as good as any that is given to our students."

He desired that no teacher should come to Hampton unless filled with a spirit of helpfulness to the unfortunate. In a letter urging one to accept an offer of a teacher's place there he says:

"You well-born, from good homes, have a great advantage over these children of darkness and misfortune. These pupils are in earnest and are to be teachers and

leaders, and in putting your mark on them you are putting it on many others."

The labor system first recognized by General Armstrong as the distinguishing mark of the Hampton school assumed more and more importance as the years went by. The circumstances of its earliest years and the final and permanent outcome of General Armstrong's work for the principle of combined manual labor and mental work are best told by Booker T. Washington:*

"When General Armstrong undertook to introduce industrial education at Hampton, the whole subject was new, not only to the Negro, but to northern and southern white people. The general impression which prevailed among a large number of colored people, especially those who lived in cities in the North and who had received some advantages of education, was that industrial education was something which was meant to retain the Negro in a kind of slavery to limit his sphere of activity. Many of the colored people felt, also, that it was a kind of education that was to be applied to the colored people only. Added to this difficulty was another. The southern white people as a rule approved of industrial education. This made the colored people all the more suspicious of its value and object. They applied in a measure the same rule to this that they applied to politics in the early years of freedom. If a southern white man favored a certain

*Principal of Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, who at Hampton Institute in its earlier years received the baptism of General Armstrong's spirit and has since his graduation carried on a similar work.

political measure, the colored people usually opposed it. Many felt that if industrial education was a good thing for the Negro the southern white man would not favor it.

"For a number of years after the work was started at Hampton it was misunderstood in the directions to which I have referred, as well as in many others which I shall not take the time to name. General Armstrong, however, went on calmly pursuing the ends that he had in view, seldom stopping to explain himself or to be troubled by misrepresentations. He realized the value of what he had in mind, and felt sure that in the end the whole country would understand him and come around to his position.

"As I have often heard him explain his theory of industrial education—both to me personally and to the school—when I was a student at Hampton, I think I might state his objects briefly as follows:

"First. He was anxious to give the colored people an idea of the dignity, the beauty and civilizing power of intelligent labor with the hand. He was conscious of the fact that he was dealing with a race that had little necessity to labor in its native land before coming to America, and after coming to this country was forced to labor for two hundred and fifty years under circumstances that were not calculated to make the race fond of hard work.

"Second. It was his object to teach the Negro to lift labor out of drudgery and toil by putting thought and skill into it.

"Third. He saw that through the medium of industrial education he could bring the two races in the South into closer relations with each other. He knew that in other matters there were differences which it would take years to change, but he knew that indus-

trially the interests of the two races were identical in the South, and that as soon as he could prove to a southern white man that an educated skilled Negro workman was of more value to the community than an ignorant, shiftless one, the southern white man would take an interest in the education of the black boy.

"Fourth. Through the industrial system at the Hampton Institute it was his object to give the students an opportunity to work out a portion of their boarding expenses. In this way he meant to prevent the school becoming a hothouse for producing students with no power of self-help or independence. I have often heard him say that the mere effort which the student put forth through the industries at Hampton to help himself was of the greatest value to the student, whether the labor itself was of very much value or not. In a word, he meant to use the industries as a means for building character—to teach that all forms of labor were honorable and all forms of idleness a disgrace.

"The idea of industrial education, beginning for our people at Hampton, has gradually spread among them until I am safe in saying that it has permeated the whole race in every section of the country. There is not a State in the Union where there is any considerable proportion of our race whose influence counts for anything in which they are not interested in industrial education and are manifesting this interest by the establishment of a school or by other substantial helps. They now realize, as never before, that the education of the head, the heart and the hand must go together. That while we need classical and professional men, we need a still larger number trained along industrial lines.

"Not only has General Armstrong's belief in industrial education spread among our people in the South, but its influence is felt in the West Indies and Africa and

other foreign countries, to such an extent that there are many calls coming from these countries for industrial education.

"The work at the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute is simply one of the results of the work of the Hampton Institute. There are a number of industrial schools, either small or large, in every State where there are any considerable number of our people.

"Perhaps the most interesting thing in connection with the influence of General Armstrong is the rapid growth and spread of industrial education among the southern white people. For a number of years after the Hampton Institute was started the southern white people gave no attention to the subject, and rather took for granted, I think, that it was something in which the Negroes only should receive training. But as they realized from year to year the rapid growth of industrial education among the colored people and the skill and intelligence which they were acquiring, southern white educators here and there began to make investigation and to inquire whether or not the same kind of education was not needed for the southern white boy and girl, and very carefully and modestly at first industries were introduced into a white school here and there. These schools, however, were not very popular among the white people at first, but the idea of industrial education among the southern white people has spread until at the present moment I think every southern State has one or more institutions established for this kind of training for white youths, and the industrial idea has become almost as popular among the white people as among the colored people.

"I think I am not going too far when I make one other suggestion, and that is that the whole country owes General Armstrong a debt not only for the rapid and

permanent growth of industrial education among the colored people and white people of the South, but it is to him that all are indebted more than to any one man for the growth of the hand training in the northern and western States. It is seldom, in my opinion, that one individual has had the opportunity through a single idea to revolutionize the educational thought and activity of so large a proportion of the world as has been true of the founder of Hampton."*

The idea referred to by Mr. Washington as held by the Negroes—namely, that industrial education tended to lower them in their own eyes and in the esteem of others—contains this germ of truth, that in the economic sense an education for labor alone, even for skilled labor, is a class education. Many Southerners no doubt acquiesced in the idea of industrial education for the Negroes, because they thought that to keep them artisans, mechanics and farmers was to keep them in a class by themselves, and a class separated from their own by a lack of culture and of common social meeting-ground. It was no wonder that the colored race distrusted Armstrong's scheme of combined labor and learning and that they sought the advantages of Hampton for many years more because of the intellectual than the manual training afforded there.

General Armstrong, however, conceived of the value of labor in a different way; he did not wish to make a labor caste, a social grade of hand-workers, although their skill and training should force

* Written for this book.

respect for their race; he simply saw that habits of labor constituted a great and the only conceivable moral force that would lift the average Negro from his attitude of indifference and slovenliness to one of earnest endeavor and industry.

As the manual-training system worked itself out at Hampton, Armstrong held with an iron grip to his original idea, "Labor as a moral force," and productive labor,* because it taught the student more life if less trade. He was filled through and through with a deep sense that by hard work alone can any of us be saved—a sense based on many obscure foundations of observation and deduction. Away back in the corners of his mind were recollections of sundry wood-choppings and milkings carried on under protest by himself and his companions, and knowledge, too, of how his father and mother had spent their ambitious youth in work, the mother spinning by the fireside, the father doing chores at his home in Pennsylvania. It was the boys who faced and conquered hard physical jobs that became the men of endurance later. These half-defined thoughts did much to shape his policy toward the Negro. What builds character in one man builds it in another, he thought, and forthwith set about to imitate the old home training—hard work done for the sake of the product and rewarded by the satisfaction of accomplishment, as well as by more

* That is, as opposed to the technical method which teaches principles alone and as a general rule destroys the product.

tangible benefits—but to better it by more instruction than his parents ever got in doing their chores. Writing (in 1887) of the St. Louis Manual-Labor Training-School, he said:

"The manual instruction is given on the Russian plan; that is, men are taught to make those forms of wood and iron which enter into every article that can be made of these materials; just as girls learn the piano by playing exercises and not tunes. . . . It is no experiment. It is the nearest to perfection of the fine methods of training head and hand together that I know of. . . . I only here remark that such a labor school belongs rather to a high civilization. The student's personal support is assured by the accumulated savings of educated generations. There is nothing to do but to go directly at the special work in hand. At Hampton, for instance, and in like schools for like people, the bread and butter and clothes question is primary if not paramount. They must have something to eat before they can be taught. So we pay them for their work, instead of, as in St. Louis, being paid for what work we give them. We must make not ideal articles, but things we can sell or eat, or it will be all up with us. In doing this our workmen learn much, not so thoroughly, nicely and quickly as by the Russian method, but perhaps better for the rougher life and experience of the South and West. A rounded character rather than mere technical skill is our point. The *morale* of the one is assumed; in the other it is to be created.

"They wish to make a specialist; we wish to make a self-reliant man. They chisel daintily away at one who is 'heir of all the ages,' to make him a little more perfect. We hew from the raw material men who have

come out of deep darkness and wrong, without inheritance but of savage nature, the best product we can, and care as much to infuse it with a spiritual life and divine energy as with knowledge of the saw, plane and hoe. Such work is full of inspiration. It drags only because few appreciate the tremendous drain on the skill and resources required. . . . There must be a difference in the educational methods for the races in our country that are a thousand years behind the whites in the line of development."

He writes in 1885:

"Eventually, special training should be given to special students. It is only a question of time and money when we shall have a technical department here equal to any in the northern cities. It is precisely in the line of our development. Constant work for wages and discipline is the foundation of our industrial and academic system. Special class-training in mechanical principles for the higher walks of labor should be its completion. . . . We aim to train teachers for teaching schools in the South, taking the best material from our industrial departments."

As the Negro advanced from what Armstrong called "the dead level of slavery" into a state of division into classes, the originally simple system in vogue at Hampton became more complex. The coming of the Indians, too, made necessary changes in the industrial departments that were productive of widespread results. Indeed, the coming of the Indians marked a distinct step in the advance of the Hampton school. Next to the tour of the

Jubilee Singers, it brought the school into wider prominence than any event.* The War Department undertook the tuition charges of these new pupils, but General Armstrong assumed the other expenses.

The Indians, unlike the Negroes, were not inured to work, but held it in lofty contempt, an attitude General Armstrong thought as fatal to their development as the laziness of the Negro. He quotes in a report, with approval, the words of Secretary Teller:

"The Indian question will never be settled till you make the Indian blister his hands. No people ever emerged from barbarism that did not emerge through labor."

He himself said on this subject:

"The Indian's endowment of land and his right to rations is like a millstone around his neck, for only when it is work or starve will the average man work." †

So, although the Government paid the bills, the red man had to go to work; and his work, directed toward trade-learning rather than toward a finished product, gave an impetus to technical training throughout the school.

Many regarded the introduction of the Indians

* The Indians first came in 1878, brought by Capt. R. H. Pratt, then an officer of the regular army in charge of Indian prisoners at St. Augustine, Florida. Seeing their deplorable condition, he wrote Armstrong for permission for seventeen of them to enter the institute.

† Referring to agency system. Report of 1887.

as a very doubtful experiment. The mingling of races in close companionship and the added financial needs the Indians would bring contained possibilities of trouble. But on the whole it proved to be a wise step and justified Armstrong's confidence in the Hampton school. The new race was assimilated and became an element of strength. No serious trouble occurred between the races, and the effect on Negroes and Indians alike was to broaden their conceptions of man and duty. The coming of the Indians also brought the institute into closer relations with its southern neighbors, who had a sympathy with the Indian which they could not summon for the Negro. From this time General Armstrong was able to rely confidently upon some of his neighbors for support in his work.

Not upon all, however. The Hampton Institute was not free from those attacks upon its work and character which usually attend successful enterprises. In 1886 a complaint was made by some persons living in the vicinity of the school that they were oppressed by its industrial competition. General Armstrong personally urged at Richmond the appointment of an investigating committee, which was asked for by the complainants, and gave every opportunity to get at the truth. The investigation ended in a hearty endorsement of the Institute. General Armstrong never allowed this attack to influence his belief in the kindliness of his neighbors, saying publicly that "the Hampton Institute was

generously recognized and appreciated, and that the investigation, so far from doing harm, had done much good."

Two years later more serious charges were made against General Armstrong and his work for the Indians. These attacks followed soon after his partial recovery from a severe illness in 1886, continued for months in the form of oft-repeated newspaper charges, disproved only to be repeated again, and wore greatly upon him.

His attitude toward all these attacks was characteristic.

"Our point," he wrote, "is not to clear ourselves, but to bring out the whole truth. None of us are too good for an investigation. . . . Any assumption of correctness is intolerable. I wish always bottom facts. In missionary work especially the whole truth should always be told."

Instead of making formal defense of the institution, he requested a committee of investigation to be sent from Washington, and invited men whose opinion carried local weight to go over the ground fully and freely with him.

"This is the point of issue," he wrote; "not to hurrah for Hampton, but to see that things are fairly looked into."

A few recommendations were made by the committee and were promptly carried out.

So as an experiment of which the details must be worked out from day to day and which was liable to mistakes and misconstruction, General Armstrong's work grew.

"Though every forward step has been a struggle," he wrote in 1890, "the school has been a growth, deep-rooted and healthy. We are here not merely to educate students, but to make men and women out of individuals belonging to the down-trodden and despised races; to make of them not accomplished scholars, but to build up character and manhood; to fit the best among them to become teachers and apply the best educational methods, for the work is a rounded one, touching the whole circle of life and demanding the best energies of those who take it up. In God's providence it has been especially given to this nation as a work to be done, and to be done now, not only for reasons of honor and humanity, but from the lower motives of self-preservation, for our own safety as much as for the good of those who are entreating us for help."

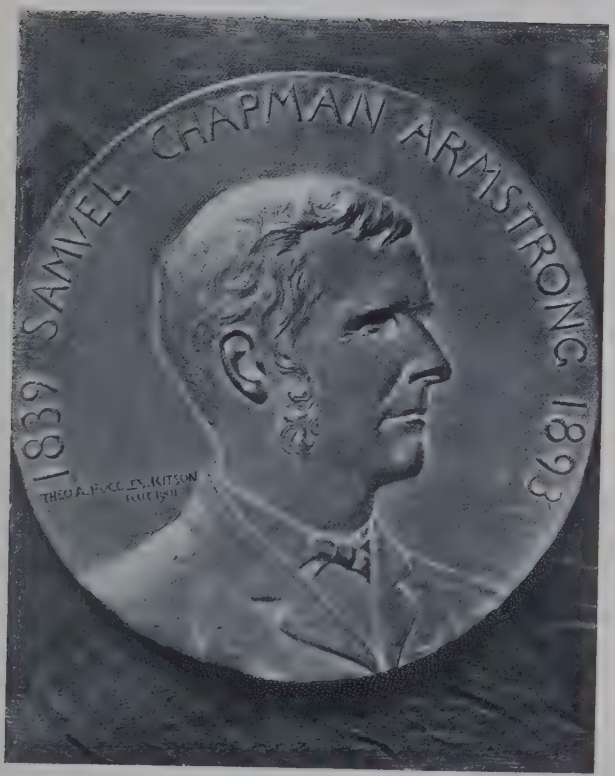
CHAPTER VIII

In the North. 1870–1890

Not more than half of this period of twenty years was spent at Hampton. To organize, stimulate and oversee the growing institution would seem to be work enough for one man; but since the very existence of Hampton depended on money, and money must be sought where it could be found, General Armstrong became an equally familiar figure in the streets of Boston and on the shell roads of Hampton. Two-thirds of his immense energies were spent in getting money to carry out the ideas that his brain was continually evolving—money in amounts generally so inadequate to his needs as to render necessary a constant adjustment of ends to means, modifications of his ideals within the bounds of what he could do with the money he had—a limitation ever present with the idealist who not only dreams but does.

In his early trips to the North he had to deal with a public weary with the story of southern outrages.

"I am getting up meetings in the various cities of eastern Massachusetts," he wrote to a brother in 1870.


1839 SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG 1893
THEO A. PYCO. BY KITSON

"People here have gotten tired of the Negro question, and wind and tide are against me. It is fearful to throw oneself against the popular current, and it is the most exhausting thing I ever tried. Northern people are so busy that they don't know what is the real state of things at the South. The story of Ku-Klux and blood is so familiar that no one notices it."

These early appeals were made at a time when business was in the process of recuperation after the stress of war time and when charitable people were besieged for aid to those left helpless by bereavement or disablement; moreover, the capabilities of the Negro race were distrusted at this time, when the excesses of the reconstruction period were still of recent occurrence; nor were people generally disposed to look with favor on a theory that at Oberlin and kindred schools had already resulted unsuccessfully,* the theory of the mingling of mental with manual work. They failed to see what Armstrong had already clearly perceived, that, rightly applied, the theory of education by training the hand was in a short time to affect education radically throughout America; that it would at length take the place of all other methods in the training of undeveloped races.

He hoped that his appeals might in a few years bring an answer adequate to the needs of the Negro, but money came slowly.

He returned again and again to his home at

* See page 158.

Hampton, between his money-raising "campaigns," as he called them, hoping to be able to rest and organize his work there, and to enjoy his peaceful home life and the society of the little family growing up by his side. He soon saw, however, that if the school was to continue its growth there was to be no end to this effort while he lived, and he resigned with sorrow this pleasant anticipation. His early hope he expressed in a letter to his mother, written August, 1870:

"Just as soon as the building, Academic Hall, the first large building on the grounds, is done, I must pitch in for an endowment of $200,000; that is the final struggle. It will cost me terribly; a three years' campaign of the hardest kind. After it I must take a rest of several months if I can afford it. This is my plan: get the endowment, then go home again. Oh, for a sight of the cocoanut trees!"

This particular plan of a three years' campaign was never carried out; after each stay at Hampton following a northern trip new needs would press with the opening of the school term, expenses incidental to growth would run over income, and he would be forced to leave home again for a trip to the North.

In a letter to his mother he thus describes an early tour:

"I was told I must expect little or nothing, but I had to beg. I was forced to get money to pay the

pressing way of the school or let it go to the wall, and at it I went with all my might and haven't had a day's rest for two months. It is hard—this begging; it takes all one's nervous and physical strength, even when people are kind and polite, as they generally are. It is never and never can be easy, and I have always to use all my strength, fire every gun in order to bring to the hurried, worried business men that powerful influence that alone can secure money in a place like Boston, where for every dollar that even the richest are able to give there are ten chances to put it to good use and twenty demands for it from one source or another. It is amazing how hard is the pressure of appeal and yet how polite and good-natured most people are, how patiently they listen and how many give up their last spare dollar not needed for personal comfort. Boston has been educated to giving and gives splendidly. But thousands are turned away—few succeed, many fail who try for money, just as in the business world. In all this howling appeal and fearful competition of charities I have been making the best fight I could—watching every chance, following up every chance, finding out new people, making new friends to the cause, talking in houses and in churches, at parties and at dinner tables, in season and out of season, and on the whole I have done well. . . . I am received always in the pleasantest way by the best people and have made a great many strong friends. Am rushing about all the time and necessity is after me sharp. . . . Am going to drive things while there's any life in me. I am well and think I can stand it; success is the best medicine and will cure me. . . . I have raised several thousand dollars, and am considered to have had remarkable success, considering the times."

There was at the time of these first trips in the North a group of persons in and about Boston who had been prominent in war and sanitary commission affairs—men and women of mature age, social position and comfortable incomes. Most of this group were women, the men of their generation being deeply engrossed in affairs or disabled or killed in the war. Such names as Quincy, Wigglesworth, Cooper, Paine, Loring, Bowditch, Putnam, Fields, Claflin, Hemenway and Parkman suggest this group of public-spirited citizens, who not only gave their interest and money to help the cause, but their personal friendship.

This friendship began, in many cases, in November, 1871, when Mrs. Augustus Hemenway asked General Armstrong and his young wife and baby to visit her in Boston. Under her social guardianship General and Mrs. Armstrong heard good music and drama and widened greatly their circle of acquaintance.

A cordial personal recognition was an agreeable relief from the strain of debt and financial responsibility that even now bore him down with a crushing weight. It was to prove not only a pleasant incident in his career, but an event of vital importance to his work, for a social introduction proved to be the very means whereby he was able to approach and to know charitable Boston. He saw that here was an opportunity to meet the people, many of whom had been friends to the rights of the Negro

when abolitionism was unfashionable and who were the most ready of all in the North to help and understand his work. For their part, they saw in the freshness and vigor of the man, in his entire absence of selfish ambition and in his notable war record promise of future success. They were attracted by his delight in working for the right—his youthful buoyancy of outlook joined to intense moral earnestness, qualities that spoke of staying power and effectiveness. The man who could say, "Isn't it jolly to be a mounted soldier in the service of the Lord?" would never desert his colors. Later they became convinced of the wisdom of his plans, and from that time on this group of people gave him hearty social and moral backing and financial support in general, though the great fortunes with which universities are founded were not theirs to give.

That he succeeded early in persuading men and women of moral influence to lend their support to his plans is shown by the fact that on January 27, 1870, his first public meeting, held in Music Hall, Boston, under the auspices of the Hawaiian Club of Boston, through his old and intimate friend General J. F. B. Marshall, was presided over by Governor Claflin, and attended by many of the philanthropic people of Boston. This meeting marked the beginning of a two months' campaign which was the first of a series that extended over a period of twenty years.

It is a striking comment on these times, as General Armstrong noted, that on the very night when this meeting was held which marked the organization of Hampton's work in New England, all that was left of the old Abolition Society met to lay down its arms and give up its organization, resolving that nothing remained for it to do. "It failed to see," as General Armstrong says, "that everything remained. Their work was just beginning when slavery was abolished."

It must not be imagined that he confined himself to making friends among the naturally philanthropic and the well-to-do classes. He desired from the beginning and throughout his life that his work should be the work of the people, and such to a peculiar extent it was. A glance at the record of gifts to Hampton for this period of twenty years shows that the majority of the individual gifts range from ten to fifty dollars. Poor country churches and religious societies sent small sums yearly; many persons gave sparingly, as they could afford it, out of moderate incomes; church fairs and Sunday-schools sent small amounts from time to time. It was the custom in many New England churches to take up a quarterly or yearly collection for Hampton, grouping it with their contributions to foreign missions or the evangelization of the new West. Hampton took its place in New England as a charity of recognized worth. Clubs or committees were organized which pledged them-

selves to send a fixed sum yearly; a scholarship or a small sum of money which paid the tuition of one student for one year and established a personal relation between giver and recipient was a favorite mode of giving. From such sources about one-half of the income of Hampton was derived for twenty years.

Armstrong's greatest single effort to enlist public interest was the tour of the Hampton Jubilee Singers, beginning in February, 1872, and lasting until June, 1875. The immediate occasion for it was the pressing need first felt in the fall of 1871 for better accommodations for girls; but as early as this year General Armstrong felt the need of a permanent endowment fund, something that would yield a regular interest and leave him more time for improving the school itself. The singers started on their long tour hoping to raise a sum of at least $200,000 for this purpose.

Many obstacles lay before them: the Fisk Jubilee Singers, aided by the influence of the American Missionary Association, had just finished their series of concerts in the North; it was doubtful whether the enthusiasm they had aroused could be awakened so soon again by a Negro chorus. Speculators assuming the name of jubilee singers were prejudicing people against all such companies; the expense of the trip would be great; many thought that it would demoralize the student singers and thus react for evil on the school. But Armstrong

had made up his mind to raise the needed $200,000, and relied on the help of friends in the North and on the charm of that music which, once heard, draws the hearer again to listen to its wild and plaintive tones.

February 13, 1872, the party started. General Armstrong regarded the duration of the tour as indefinite, expecting to extend it to England and California if it was successful. The party traveled by day and gave their concerts generally in the evening, taking their school-books with them and studying persistently while on train or boat in order to keep up with their classes. Audiences, indeed, were not so large as those that gathered to listen to the Fisk singers, nor were the sums of money taken in as great. At the close of the first year $10,000 was sent back to Hampton as net proceeds. The second year was less directly profitable, owing to the financial panic of 1874 and 1875, but much interest was excited. Over 7,000 copies of the book, "Hampton and Its Students," were sold, and a gift of $10,000 was made for the completion of a chapel for general gatherings. Mrs. Augustus Hemenway and Mrs. S. T. Hooper, of Boston, were present at many of the concerts, lent their valuable influence and prestige to the undertaking, and aided in many ways to reduce expenses and excite enthusiasm. The singers gave 500 concerts, traveled over eighteen States, and visited Canada.

The tour of the singers did little to start an

endowment fund, but as an advertisement it was invaluable, and in no other way could information about Hampton have been so widely diffused; in no other way could the acquaintance of Armstrong have been enlarged so rapidly. It was the first step in the larger life of the Hampton school. It was the first presentation of its claim upon the whole country for support. After this tour General Armstrong was no longer simply the principal of a struggling Negro school in Virginia; he became a public man with a scope of influence which increased yearly until it became national.

Already in the midst of the trip he perceived the scope of his work, its needs, its future and its sure support, and wrote to the editor of a New Bedford (Massachusetts) newspaper:

"I enclose a circular to which you may, I hope, call attention, as it refers to a very important movement and one which would probably interest your readers. You will hear of it anyhow, and I write to anticipate rumor and, if possible, prevent unpleasant impressions liable to be formed from my going into such an enterprise.

"The truth is, we have, as Lincoln used to say of the war, a 'big job' on our hands. It's no use to whine about the great demand for means to lift up the Negro race. The work is not done; it is given us as a nation to do. It is the duty of no section, but of every one. Practically those who care for it, wherever they live, do and will help; those who don't care will not. The helpers are comparatively few. The money contributed

has been in small sums—rarely has a large amount been given. But aggressive, powerful institutions that make their impress upon the populations need large endowments and extensive buildings, so that students from all quarters can be massed together, instructed, inspired with vital truth, and sent out as builders of a better civilization. Hampton aims to do the Negro race a real good by supplying a host of thoughtful, trained, practical teachers, who have been drilled not only in books, but in shops and on the farm, in the kitchen and in the sewing-room. These will teach not only spelling and arithmetic, but the more important lessons of respect for labor, and they will impart of their own essential manhood and womanhood to those whom they teach. The Negro has been taught to work, not to despise it; he has the habits of labor, but no enthusiasm for it; he is satisfied with his job if only his employer is. The true laborer may not love hard work, but he does his work well for the sake of doing it well and takes pride in it.

"We wish to spread broadcast right ideas of life and labor; to unite morality and religion in the holy tie that binds them and that is not recognized here: for the divorce is complete.

"Hundreds of teachers, apostles of a true Christianity and civilization, are needed. We are compelled constantly to say to applications from all parts of Virginia, 'We cannot send you any more teachers.' Four times as many as we can supply are needed now, and schoolhouses are empty and thousands untaught for want of them. Yet we have been forced, for want of room, to reject this year thirty-five young men and women who were eager to come and fit themselves to teach. We have encamped thirty in old army tents in the open field, and they have been for months in terrible freezing

weather and exposed to howling winds. But not a murmur. They'll stand it a good while yet—all this and all next winter if necessary. We expect to have seventy or eighty men under canvas next year. But we cannot put women in tents. We have planned a large dormitory, including sixty-eight girls' rooms, a chapel, sewing-room, etc., capable of accommodating nearly 140 women. It will cost complete $75,000. We must have it next fall or send back fifty colored girls to the pine-barrens and plantations. It is of no use to beg. We must help ourselves. We propose to give concerts, singing the old Negro spirituals, of which we have collected an entirely new and wonderfully beautiful number, and with the avails of these concerts raise the walls of a building for the education of colored women. I believe the men and the women of the North will help us. They will have the chance. We will give our first concert in Washington next Saturday night, the 15th inst., and will advance upon Philadelphia, New York and Boston. It is a venture and may not be successful. But it seems the thing to try, for there's a power, a vividness, a genuineness in this fast-dying-out music that excels everything ever composed. It is the echo of old times; it is full of wailing tenderness and passionate faith. It will soon be gone. Why should it not be used as a reminder to the North that there really was such a thing as slavery and that its terrible and its worst effects are upon the Negro yet?

The degradation of centuries cannot be thrown off in a decade or generation. Negro civilization must be a slow growth of time and of persistent, untiring effort. Hampton is organized on a permanent basis in order to accomplish its end, which is to see the Negro through."

Nothing will maintain a man under severe strain so well as inspiration and a sense of humor. He wrote to his class secretary from Hampton, September 30, 1874:

"In obedience to your instruction I have the honor to inform you of myself, life, wife and children as follows: I have a remarkable machine for the elevation of our colored brethren on which I mean to take out a patent. Put in a raw plantation darky and he comes out a gentleman of the nineteenth century. Our problem is how to skip three centuries in the line of development and to atone for the loss and injustice of the ages. About $370,000 have been expended here since I took hold in the fall of 1867.

"I have been in the traveling show business for the last two years; have given over 300 concerts with the Hampton students (ex-slaves) in behalf of the school.

"This is a rough and terrible fight with difficulties, but I think I'm on top.

"I am the most fortunate man in the world in my family. I have a wife and two little girls—one two and the other four years of age. My 'jewels' are the rarest and richest on the planet.

"'Sixty-two' men will always be welcome at my home on Hampton Roads—your reverence [the class secretary] especially. I have reserved the choicest oysters in this paradise of oysters for the exclusive use of the members of that class.

"The stake of my destiny is planted here, and I have never regretted it; this is part of the war on a higher plane and with spiritual weapons; it will not soon end and success is yet to be won. I cannot understand the prevailing views of the war among pious and intelligent

Americans. It is simply barbaric—to whip the South and go home rejoicing; to build monuments of victory, leaving one-third of their countrymen in the depths of distress. The case is chiefly moral and the duty sits very lightly on the general conscience."

He paid the price for celebrity which most public men must pay, however, in the sacrifice of home life and in enforced separation from his family. This separation was the more painful because his wife's health had begun to fail. In 1878 Mrs. Armstrong died, leaving two little girls six and eight years of age. Here ended such broken home life as this naturally most domestic of men had been able to enjoy in his free moments; and Armstrong became a kind of wanderer, finding in his life at Hampton absorption in routine work and in the time spent at the North a sympathy and companionship in the society of congenial friends that was lacking in his own home.

The years 1878 to 1890 may be especially called the constructive period of the Hampton school; during these twelve years alone eighteen large buildings, at a cost of $423,400, were erected and land costing $13,500 was purchased. In round numbers the expenditures for "plant" alone during

these years, exclusive of running expenses, amounted to $500,000; from 300 students in 1878 the number increased to 678 in 1886, a number not since (in 1902) exceeded. A natural consequence of this rapid growth was a great increase in running expenses; and General Armstrong was obliged to raise yearly from $50,000 to $80,000 merely to keep the wolf from the door.

Under the pressure of this necessity, he addressed himself with new care to his work in the North, like the hero of a story which he was fond of telling, and which embodied what he called his "rule of conduct":

"Once there was an old darky who could not be dissuaded from hunting in an empty 'possum hole. 'Ain't no 'possum in dat hole? Dey's just *got* to be, 'cause dey's nuffin' in de house fer supper.'"

So the "'possum hole" of the North was again and again invaded. He wrote to a friend, engaged like himself in the education of the northern public: "Punch the public or you get nothing; give them no peace till you get your money." A certain obstinacy of the sort that fights blindly to the end was aroused by these constant struggles against competition, lack of interest and the prophecies of failure which often came to his ears.

"The dry bones of a thousand failures are in our path," he said. "The wet blanket of endless disappointments has been thrown on us. Men say, 'You can't do it.' Experienced men shake their heads; but

G—— [a missionary friend] is going to take hold and worry the Christian Church till it planks down the money, and it's of no use. Saint and sinner must, side by side, jerk the old thing till it moves. Infidel and the elect will drop their mites into the contribution box till it is filled. We are doing this over a vortex of financial calamity, into which we hope not to fall."

In his appeal for money he always made an impassioned plea, not for a direct gift of money to relieve the needs of the Negro, but for money to help him to help himself through a system of industrial labor. Knowing that people are best reached through their emotions, he generally took with him a small band of singers, who could touch with their pathetic songs hearts that remained impervious to any other appeal; and perceiving, too, that until a cause is personified it has little power to touch the hearts of men, he always included in his program a few telling recitals of personal experiences. The aim of these northern trips was not primarily to bring home money, but, in his own words, "to enlist the interest of the friends of southern education, and if possible to give direction to the benefactions of those disposed to aid in the elevation of the lately enfranchised race."

He first organized his campaigns on paper, and sent an agent before him to arrange for places of meetings; then he himself, with a quartet of Negroes, followed—accompanied, perhaps, by two Indian students. Their tours extended sometimes

as far west as Chicago or St. Louis, but usually centered round about the towns of New England and the cities of New York and Philadelphia. If the meeting was in a church at a regular Sunday or week-day evening service, a collection was taken; if in a private house, none was taken. General Armstrong utilized the interest felt by almost every one in the slave songs, the desire of young people to see an Indian, and the philanthropic sympathies of many toward the freedmen, to draw audiences, which gathered in elegant private drawing-rooms, in hotel parlors, in churches and in schools. To them spoke the little band, ever vitalized into new enthusiasm by the spiritual passion which General Armstrong diffused like an atmosphere about him.

"I must win," he said. "I can't but see that many put faith in me; it would be wrong to humanity to fail, and the way is clear. God has not darkened the way, but His hand points to a steep and craggy height—it must be climbed—I will climb it."

To infuse enthusiasm into half-alive interests seemed to be the work to which he was especially dedicated by nature.

"It [enthusiasm] is a scarce article always," he wrote. "Everybody is 'interested' in everything that is good. We all are in the elevation of the Hottentots or that the Marquesas Islanders should have shirts!"

His companion for twelve years in this work

of energizing passive wills, Reverend Hollis Burke Frissell, thus describes a meeting which may be considered typical:

"When the other speeches had been made, General Armstrong produced some large diagrams and pictures of the new buildings. People were asked to take rooms for furnishing at $15 each. He was so rapid in his utterance that the audience could hardly hear one word in ten which he spoke, but he was so intense that they were interested and gave the furnishing for the rooms. I think from $15,000 to $20,000 were subscribed that night. His struggle to be deliberate in speaking was always interesting. He would walk on to the stage in a very quiet way and commence slowly and go faster and faster as he got into his subject. He always thought it wise to present facts, statements of what had been done, rather than philosophical disquisitions and race and educational problems."

Another who often attended these meetings as a listener says:

"I suppose that every lover of General Armstrong recalls some special incident which seems most entirely typical of the man's life and heart. For my part, I think oftenest of one of those scenes in his many begging journeys to the North. It was at a little suburban church far down a side street on one winter night in the midst of a driving storm of sleet. There was, as nearly as possible, no congregation present; a score or so of humble people, showing no sign of any means to contribute, were scattered through the empty spaces, and a dozen restless boys kicked their heels in the front

pew. Then in the midst of this emptiness and hopelessness up rose the worn, gaunt soldier as bravely and gladly as if a multitude were hanging upon his words, and his deep-sunk eyes looked out beyond the bleakness of the scene into the world of his ideals, and the cold little place was aglow with the fire that was in him, and it was like the scene on the Mount, that was not any less wonderful and glistening because only three undiscerning followers were permitted to see the glory." *

When he spoke, in hall, church, theater or parlor, his speech gushed forth with the ease of the born orator; but rapid as it was, it could not keep up with his thoughts, which seemed ever pressing it outward and onward. Yet it was not the flowing style of his contemporary, Phillips Brooks. His ideas were shot forth in brief, compact sentences, not distinguished so much by logical sequence as by their power to throw flash-lights of truth on different phases of the subjects he touched. Once, in commenting on a certain discussion held by a number of ministers, he unintentionally characterized his own style, saying:

"Their discussion was rather plain and perky. Not one of them took the subject up and shook it as a terrier dog shakes a rat."

No side of his work is more characteristic than his persistent effort through times of financial stress or in apparently unprofitable situations. He said:

* Reverend Francis G. Peabody, in an address delivered Founders' Day, 1898.

"Do men give more money to good work when they make the most or when they think the most? For twenty-three years I have worked for a charity, through sharp times and through prosperous seasons, but the times have made very little difference. Nothing extra is to be expected for the Lord's work in 'flush times,' and a certain fine spirit carries it through the darkest day."

One gets an interesting view of his own attitude toward this unceasing labor of money-raising in the following extract from a letter to the *Southern Workman:*

"We are now on our way to Columbus for our thirtieth meeting, having since our first, at Scranton, Pennsylvania, on November 11th, which was most successful and satisfactory, held meetings in the cities of Boston, New York, Cleveland (Ohio), Detroit, Milwaukee, Madison, Chicago, Indianapolis and Cincinnati. We are to end with Columbus, Pittsburg, New York City and Germantown, Pennsylvania, on December 11th. Our party consists of Reverend Mr. Frissell and myself, with our quartet, two of whom, Major Boykin and Mr. Daggs, are also speakers, and two Indian boys. Our main object has been to create interest rather than to collect money, and yet the plate collections, kindly volunteered at the end of most of the meetings, will probably bring a few hundred dollars over expenses. A few seventy-dollar scholarships have been secured. Presbyterian, Episcopal, Congregational, Baptist and other churches have been most hospitably opened everywhere without expense to us. Clergymen of various denominations have usually honored the platform and taken part with us in hearty and cordial ways.

The rich chords of the old slave music have floated away into the arches of church and cathedral, or been echoed by the walls of plain 'meeting houses' with equally touching effect, sustaining always their fitness and dignity. To the simple and original thoughts of the speakers we also owed much. The first two speeches are somewhat personal and descriptive; the last two are broader in outlook and more general in statement, and we found they are quite as appropriate for Sundays as for weekday services, for they are genuine and straightforward, showing that they are the honest outcome of the speaker's experience. The endeavor to create a breadth of interest had been one of our aspirations. Our claims are second to those of local charities and denominational societies created in the interest of the two races whom we represent; churches as such do not help Hampton, but individuals in them are our help and strength. We always, I think, strengthen rather than weaken the local effort for Indian and Negro, and have done almost as much good for other schools as for our own. Our point has been to make a better and broader hope for and interest in both races. But it is of little use to excite momentary interest unless this is followed up by personal effort, and there is seldom any one to do this, though it sometimes happens that some listener is moved to undertake it as a labor of love. Those willing to work have already all that they can do. I never realized more fully how true it is that Christian churches are 'centers of work.' Pulpits are used so much as advertising mediums that printed Sunday bulletins are introduced instead and work well. A money harvest, like any other, comes from cultivation of the ground. We sow seed, much of which would bear fruit if attended to, but at the moment it is always impossible to estimate as to

the effect of any meeting, for there may be far-off results of which we see no present evidence. The maxim of war that 'one shot in five hundred hits' often occurs to me. Always, too, it has to be borne in mind that an enlightened public sentiment is at the foundation of all good public effort. From this point of view the educational value of our thirty-five meetings more than justified what they cost in time and money. The usually good audiences represent only a small part of those influenced. Newspaper notes and reports have reached hundreds of thousands, and though only glanced at by most readers, are on the side of hope and faith in our 'despised races.' It is true that all this is only a 'drop in the bucket,' but drop by drop the bucket is filled. Ours is one of many influences by which the Negro and Indian questions are kept before the people. During the first twenty years after the war magazines and newspapers contained little discussions of the 'race question'; now books, pamphlets and articles on it are constantly appearing, and most of them have only impracticable solutions to offer, such as disenfranchisement or deportation of the blacks, etc. As an object lesson, therefore, our four speeches are always telling. The two Negroes and their two Indian companions stand for tens of thousands behind them, who only need a fair chance to become good citizens. They speak their own thoughts and words, not written for them, and their appeal is strong. 'Give us a chance to make men and women of ourselves' is all they ask. . . . The study of audiences is interesting, and we are struck by differences as we go west and in the churches in which we speak. There are almost always a lot of small boys in front, who come to get a good look at the Indians, and can hardly realize that these tall, manly, uniformed young men are

the objects of their curiosity. They are a sure test of the meeting; if it is too long, their gaze wanders and they finally fall asleep. While their eyes are still open we know all is well. The newspapers are as a rule ready to lend a hand to a good cause and have been uniformly kind and liberal in their motives, but there is a marked difference in reporters, some catching the spirit of things while others merely state the facts. The freshness and vigor of the student speakers and singers, after thirty-five meetings of the same kind, are remarkable. No sign of weakening or of parrot-like repetition can be seen—each new audience is a stimulus that brings one up to his best. School studies are continued in the cars and at hotels. A month out is a serious thing, and would put the boys hopelessly back in their studies did they not work over their books every day from three to five hours.

"I notice a better feeling of late toward well-appearing colored people. All hotels do not welcome our party, but we can always get good places. On the whole, prejudice seems to be slowly giving way. There is a marked difference between to-day and 1873, when the Hampton singers were out on their campaign of three and a half years to erect Virginia Hall. I am sure that the present expedition has done good; the manly bearing of the students has been marked and their appearance at table commended. There has been no friction whatever, only kindness and good will from first to last. Things are improving along the whole line, too slowly for some, but that revolutions do not go backward is strikingly shown in recent American history."

On these trips he denied himself, for economy's sake, the ordinary ameliorations of travel, rarely even taking a parlor car. He habitually read or

wrote while riding in trains, and thus it was that he was able to keep up the wide range of reading which held him in touch with men of widely varied interests. In traveling he often went to the same hotels as his colored students, refusing offers of private hospitality from a sense of loyalty to the race who had responded so nobly to his efforts in their behalf.

General Armstrong felt that the effort of raising money by such means as these, difficult as they were, should never be completely abandoned; for he feared that the Hampton school, once comfortably well off, would become an "easy" place for a young man or woman to get an education, and that the North, once free from constant appeals to aid, would become indifferent to the needs of the Negro and the Indian. This feeling, coupled with his always earnest desire to have a fund that would "lessen the severe and in more ways than one costly labor of collecting income, give the school a life of its own, independent of any one man's life or power, and better secure it against exigencies," caused him at times to speak in ways that appeared inconsistent, but it will readily be seen that his thought was simple; he desired partial, not complete endowment.

In the course of these "begging" trips—his own designation—there was necessarily, as his acquaintance became larger, a vast amount of individual work, carried on by means of personal calls at the

houses or offices of business men or by means of letters. It was his habit not to ask directly for money, but to present his cause and let it plead for itself, but there were times when a more direct method was necessary.

"I always feel as if I was sticking my head in the lion's mouth when I am asking for money. Well, it has never been bitten off yet," he said.

In a letter to a friend to whom he was used to apply for advice in these personal matters, he says:

"Would it be wise, do you think, to write direct to ——, who must be overloaded and deafened by continuous howls of poverty-stricken institutions and humanity? But we howl, too; it is our business. But it doesn't do to howl imprudently; discretion is the better part of begging. My idea would be to suggest a seventy-dollar scholarship given yearly, with *no promise whatever* of continuance, taking the matter up yearly for a fresh decision. I care for no pledges. People who take hold here usually don't let go. Voluntary offerings are the best. Pledges are uncomfortable. Still we need not a big lift all at once, but a stream coming in steadily from year to year. I wish to get people into this, to swell the stream, making it a river of life and light to Africa."

In these personal dealings great discretion, tact and delicacy were needed. To the same friend he wrote:

"Many times it is better to do nothing in order to succeed. People who give and who advise are com-

pelled to a severe consistency and system of use both of money and of influence, which is indispensable to the best results. Where I have the most influence I use it the least. The result, I believe, is in the end far better."

In a report to the trustees, written in 1889, he says:

"I never cease to wonder at the patience and kindness of those who daily listen to appeals from here and some other quarters, the wear and tear of which can be hardly less than of those who solicit aid from these overtaxed givers. Having myself sometimes been called on to endorse agents from southern schools, I have found it usually difficult to do justice to these earnest workers and at the same time to be fair to the charitable who should give in the light of all the facts. I therefore venture to tell briefly and by way of illustration our own methods.

"Mr. Thomas Cayton, a graduate of the Hampton school and for six years a teacher, but compelled by a partial loss of sight to give up this work, is sent to secure subscriptions for the *Southern Workman* and aid for and interest in the school. He presents a letter from me, stating his mission, his salary, that he has no commission, how his expenses are paid and the amount and description of the money he collected the preceding year. In these cases I think money should always be refused unless the gifts of the preceding year are accounted for.

"Nothing so encourages carelessness and waste of money (of which there has been a great deal), by often well-meaning agents, as taking for granted that an impressive appeal is necessarily trustworthy.

"Those who do not keep strict accounts are not fit to be trusted with money, and such accounts would sometimes show a large per cent. used as expenses. Care in giving means, in the end, the ability to give not only more, but more wisely."

If his overtures were not at once heeded, the delay or failure only stimulated him to fresh effort. One of his favorite mottoes was a saying of his old colonel in the Troy regiment: "Captain, when you want anything and can't get it, raise the devil!" General J. F. B. Marshall said of him:

"For most people an obstacle is something in the way to stop going on, but for General Armstrong it merely meant something to climb over, and if he could not climb all the way over he would get up as high as possible and then crow!"

As he grew older he began to crave the stimulus of constant hurry, work and rush, and grew impatient after even a few days of inactivity.

"I have had a taste of blood," he said; "that is, I have had the taste of life and work—cannot live without the arena. I must be in it. . . . Despair shakes his skinny hands and glares his hideous eyes on me to little purpose. I feel happy when all my powers of resistance are taxed."

This restless life produced its due effect physically and he was troubled for years with dyspepsia and sleeplessness. It is an indication of great physical

vigor, the priceless legacy of his long and wholesome boyhood, that in spite of this physical weakness he was able to keep the courage and optimism of his youth until middle life. He sincerely tried to conquer these harmful physical tendencies, to use great caution in eating and to take rest whenever possible, but never succeeded in bearing in mind his physical limitations when it seemed to him that the welfare of Negro and Indian was at stake.

He wrote to his wife as early as 1870:

"Your prayer that the sweet little cherub that sits up aloft may watch over me in cars, boats and hotels is especially in point in respect to the latter, for do not little imps hide in fried potatoes and oysters, while the paw of the fiend has consecrated pie to an unholy mission? Dyspepsia is but the buffeting of Satan, while sirens that lure the young man to the shipwreck of his soul do not in reality sing songs upon inviting shores, but with white aprons on bring hot cakes wherewith to entice him to his ruin. The Circean cup is for sale by all druggists. . . . Sound, sensible cooking has a great deal to do with the sublimest raptures of the soul."

In 1886 he suffered from a severe illness, the effect of this long-continued strain, and at this time made strong resolutions to reform:

"It all comes from overdoing—from my intemperate life. I have to learn a hard lesson: to reform, to have to live in a wise, not wasteful but useful, way after a life of extravagance is not easy. Am I to be like an old patched-up steam boiler that after all is worn out

and good for nothing? Heaven forbid! Help me with your prayers!"

At this time a subscription was taken up among his friends and a considerable sum sent to him to use as a "health fund." His comments on this gift are characteristic. To a friend, one of the principal givers, he writes:

"Have just received—as a health fund—a trust fund to turn into strength and work for the country what is left of my somewhat weakened powers. I hope to make it a good investment. I will try to work it out and make my good friends feel that they have done well, for you know there are other fellows better than I putting in their best licks for God and humanity who don't make half the fuss I do, who to do their work have had to keep near to the paths of impecuniosity, so to speak, and need looking after; for me to feast is to go terribly back on them, for it would discourage the good like you, who are on the lookout to see what lift or help they can give in the world's scrimmage. Pray for me that I be sensible and level-headed in this new and blessed and yet trying experience."

Some time after the receipt of this "trust fund" he rendered a formal account of the expenditure of it for distribution to the unknown donors through the chairman of the committee in charge of the matter. The sum, which amounted to a few thousand dollars, he had divided into three parts. The first part, which amounted to about half of the entire sum, he spent in putting up a small cottage,

conveniently near, yet separated by a stretch of water from his home at Hampton. He writes concerning this item of expenditure:

"Bluff Cottage is a pretty, well-kept cottage across Hampton Creek, beautifully situated upon the highest point of the neighboring shore. There I spend a few weeks in the late spring, and the teachers get delightful rest and change, going in parties of six or seven to spend Saturday and Sunday nights in the late winter and spring. The sound of plashing waves and the fine water view over there make it a complete break from school routine."

The next statement concerns a small sum spent in a trip to the South and the Bahama Islands. Referring to this he writes:

"My southern trip has been ever since a great help in discussing the Negro question. I had long wished to study the blacks in the Gulf States and the English treatment of them at the West Indies. . . . Five weeks in Dakota in August and September, visiting six reservations and studying Indian life and conditions, has given me vantage ground of the greatest value in writing and speaking on the Indian question. I have had almost constant use for the facts and impressions gained on my southern and western trips."

The few hundred dollars that remained were used partly as a gift to an associate and partly for a summer camping trip:

"Mr. —— has had much extra work on account of my illness and needed the little trip. Camping out

with my daughters at Asquam Lake, New Hampshire, in July and August, was most pleasant and in every way profitable. . . . Please excuse this egotistic statement."

This use of money was characteristic. All personal funds were to him trust funds, to be put, if absolutely necessary, into procuring a working outfit of health, but if possible to be given directly over to the pressing needs of his work, whose varied claims could never be met by gifts, which were usually for specified purposes alone.

Such was the pressure of his work, however, that the excellent resolutions he formed when sick and suffering modified but slightly his later course in life. It was only at the houses of friends in the North that he found such approach to rest as his temperament allowed him.

Says one by whose hearth he felt most at home:

"He talked little of his work unless asked directly about it. He caught up any topic that was touched upon and tossed the ball of conversation most nimbly to and fro. A delightful gaiety is my most general recollection. There were serious moments when he rose to very great heights of simplicity and insight. . . . One felt the whole striving of the man toward a goal he revered.

"But geniality, wit, humanity, all these showed in his speech, and when he came in it was always as if a wind of strength and healing blew. I never saw him discouraged or downcast, even when things seemed very doubtful. I remember his

telling me once about a college mate he had just seen who had grown suddenly very rich, and spreading his hands he said, 'These are all there is between my little girls and the world,' and then he threw back his head and gave a most boyish laugh. 'And that's the way I like it!'

"He was often brilliant, always delightful, even when we knew he was tired and suffering. It was his wonderful courage that never flagged that shines most in my memory. Whatever topic he touched on, one felt the gallant heart. . . . He told delightful stories to my children, and no one ever went away from him without strength and fresh hope."

He often sought relief under pressure of care in some outburst of nonsense. When a company was gathered together to meet him socially, he sometimes offered to sing his famous Chinese song. When all had expressed a desire to hear it, he would procure a tin pan and fork for each and tell every one to beat on the pan when he gave the word.

He would then sit down in the center of the circle, and with a perfectly solemn face sing gibberish which sounded sufficiently like Chinese, declaring it was a classical love song in that tongue. At intervals he would call for the pans, and all would solemnly beat their pans, producing dreadful discords; at last some one would burst out laughing and a general laugh would ensue, which was what he made the performance for.

He hated melancholy, long-faced gatherings; if

he could include in his games staid, elderly persons who were used to taking themselves seriously, or, as he would say, "unused to standing on their heads as jolly ministers should," he was more than pleased.

He frequently attended the conference held at Lake Mohonk in behalf of the Indians, and enjoyed every moment of scrambling in the woods and rowing on the lake. One who knew him there says: "He used to say, 'Just a minute, till I have disposed of these missionaries, and then we will go out and flop.'" This process consisted of lying near some running stream and watching the clouds float by, interrupting his reverie often by some funny incident or story.

At these Lake Mohonk conferences he would many a time keep every one sitting near him in fits of laughter with his running comments, and then without a moment's warning would be on his feet, speaking with all his usual ardor and vehemence.

It is as impossible to reproduce the sparkle and dash of his talk as it is to throw on the canvas the living man, but bits from his private correspondence may serve as suggestions of the quality of his conversation.

These bits are usually found in no direct connection with what precedes or follows. They are, as it were, flashed out as a result of some internal process of attrition:

"The chief comfort in life is babies. Institutions are a grind, humanity a good deal of a bore; causes are tiresome, and men of one idea are a weariness."

"What you spend on yourself you lose; what you give you gain."

"Don't let Emerson with his glittering half-truths trouble. He is almost a prophet, and as he says indeed, 'Love will change.' That is well, because it only rests with us whether for the better or worse. There is always an evil alternative to every bright possibility. . . ."

"This is a world of cares; let us rather say this—we are immortal; our present coil is on the whole a very comfortable one and is truly wonderfully made. We are compelled to rub for a few years through a world in which things are very much mixed up, and we should make the best of it, and above all be good natured."

"When it comes to the scratch, I believe in the prayers of the unorthodox—why are they not as effectual as any? From the deep human heart to the Infinite Heart there is a line along which will pass the real cry and the sympathetic answer—a double flash from the moral magnetism that fills the universe. Its conditions are not found in theological belief, but in the spirit of a little child. We can no more understand our human brother than our Father in Heaven without bringing faith—the evidence of things unseen—the subject of things hoped for—to our aid."

"I attended Dr. S——'s church and liked the old gentleman's preaching, only he read off what he had to say, and, in the mysterious way ministers usually have—or, rather, the devil does it for them—he administered a kind of opiate along with his stirring appeal which enabled us to go away feeling pretty comfortable."

"The deep truth about all noble life is that it is renewed every day. It commences from no date. It

begins with the day, with the hour; it is constant renewal; the passing moment is a crisis. There is little inertia in the soul. The past has enough to do to help itself, and we cannot make reserves of goodness; the need of each day exhausts all the supply."

"True worship is a gentle, sensitive, shrinking emotion that steals softly into hearts in quiet moments, often in response to some beautiful scene; sometimes it comes to us from the faithful true ones near us. It seems to shun the throng. There is a religious impression often in a magnificent church, but it is not worship."

"All progress of strong hearts is by action and reaction. Human life is too weak to be an incessant eagle flight toward the Sun of Righteousness. Wings will be sometimes folded because they are wings. The pinions that endure in eternal flight are fitted to us by Heaven's messengers that meet the ascending spirit. The earthly struggle must be enduring—that is all. There must be no surrender; we can't expect much of victory here."

"I dislike public prayer very much, because one is so self-conscious; it is a hard thing to rise up before people and pray to God and not to them. I have been greatly troubled in this way, and only take part in that public exercise when it is plainly in the line of duty and *good sense*. I don't mind the students here; I enjoy it with them alone, but there are always some of the household present and that I hardly fancy. But this is all a confession of weakness."

"The kingdom of heaven will, I think, come through Christian sociology. Missionary work is founded on it, but doesn't half recognize the fact."

"Experience has been called 'an arch through which gleams the untraveled world'; it has been called 'stern lights'; but I prefer to call it a slow fire over which

mortals are gradually turned on the toasting-fork of destiny."

"'There's no such word as fail.' It is very true. Equally true that there is failure in all success, and the converse is true."

"Politics and philanthropy are a grind; only when one is really at the post of duty and knows it there is a sensation of being lifted and lifting (*et teneo et teneor*) which sometimes comes gradually over one. Detail is grinding, the whole inspiring. God's kings and priests must drudge in seedy clothes before they can wear the purple."

"Barbarism is horrible in its reality, but picturesque and beautiful in its ruin. In killing it there is danger that we kill the man that has it and his interesting accessories."

"Royalty is kept from reality and in respect to genuine opportunities is singularly destitute. The beggar is nearer to truth than the king."

"God gave men moral energies for moral ends as other energies for other ends. You will gather where you sow—you will raise sugar where you work for it. You will raise up intelligence, morality and religion as you shall work for that."

"The adversary of souls hasn't half a chance at one on a bright winter's day. Conscience shoulders arms and stands at 'attention.' Hence New England virtue; hence tropical looseness."

"To get at truth, divide a hyperbole by any number greater than two. . . . In animated narrative divide facts by ten."

Naturally interested in educational topics, Armstrong had some radical theories in regard to education as applied to his own and other people's children.

He regarded education in its broadest sense, and always laid more stress on the influence of the teacher and of the surroundings than on any method or course of study.

"Education by atmosphere is the most real; its results are eternal, for it makes character," and he regarded character as the goal in all education. "Development is more and more my idea of education." He thought it right that each person should follow his own bent, and felt that "it is mean for parents to interfere with their children's growth and progress" by claiming their society when their development seemed to be better forwarded elsewhere than at home.

As the Indian work at Hampton was sustained financially by yearly Congressional grants, trips to Washington to secure and insure these appropriations and visits to the Lake Mohonk Indian Conference to keep himself informed concerning Indian affairs thus became a part of General Armstrong's yearly routine and brought him into greater intimacy with national affairs.

Thus he came more and more into the public eye. As the leading exponent of Negro education, as a champion of the Indian, and as a successful industrial educator, he was often invited to address clubs and societies in eastern cities, attend public dinners, or write articles for the press, so that during his later years he had not only the carrying on of Hampton and the effort of raising money to meet

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its needs, but the varied demands of many public interests to complicate his life.

In the year 1887 the degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him by his *alma mater*, Williams College, and in 1889 by Harvard University. He felt these honors deeply, yet received them in all humility as tokens of the nation's kindness to those who were doing its work. His response to a speech of introduction at Harvard shows this impersonal habit of mind. It was his work, not himself, that was ever uppermost. He said:

"Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Alumni: This is my first presence at a Harvard commencement, and I can never forget the pleasure and the honor of it. It is great. Those of us who receive these honors have more pleasure in them for the sake of our mothers and our friends than for ourselves, and I thank you for them as well as myself. This scene is grand and inspiring. You have nobly honored your soldier boys in this hall. I think the next time the country calls for them there will be one hundred per cent. of Harvard students ready to go. Dealing with the so-called despised races, I have found that there is an inspiration in self-help; that from the incessant daily strain of brain and body in a combined system of labor and schooling, such as would be impossible as a basis of any northern educational work, there comes to these people a manliness and moral force and vigor of thought and action which command the respect of all. The simply trained Negro boy or Indian boy of Hampton may be worth as much as an accomplished Harvard graduate, and he is as ready to die for his country and, what is more difficult, to live for it."

To General Armstrong's campaigns through the North is due a large part of the present interest and confidence in the possibilities of the Negro under wise leadership. On these topics the public is now informed to a far greater extent than formerly, and the opinion that industrial training is the training best adapted to these weaker races has become general. Both his aims at the Hampton school and his method of raising money at the North have been many times duplicated, until few persons in the North can question the fact that it pays, and that it is a national duty to educate the Negro and the Indian into worthy citizenship.

CHAPTER IX

The Negro and the South

General Armstrong's lifelong habit of preserving a non-partizan attitude, of looking at both sides of a question, stood him in good stead in his relations to his southern neighbors and to the complex problems of southern life. It enabled him to regard them from the point of view of a philosopher and not of a political opponent. The following extracts are taken from letters written to a society in Honolulu of which he was a life member. He often spoke of the similarity of the problems of southern American and of Hawaiian life, each encompassed by a large population of dark-skinned people. In 1889 he wrote:

"You get from the papers very little insight into the South. They write for their market. The South is more and more tolerant of free speech; tremendous but quiet changes are going on, even in the heart of Mississippi, where the splendid chances for stock raising are attracting Northerners. Cotton-growing there is leaving the uplands for the Yazoo bottom and like regions, whither the Negroes are flocking by thousands and getting small farms, while Bermuda and orchard and other grasses are found to flourish on the exhausted old cotton fields. Grass makes beef, beef makes men;

cotton is dethroned, grass is king; the crop is worth three times as much as the cotton crop. When the South raises its own meat—pork especially—and ceases to buy it in the northwest, reconstruction will be complete, for then the South can pay any price for education."

"The Negroes of the South are capable of and do many provoking things; but generally the fiery southern spirit acts so excessively that sympathy with the provocation is lost in condemnation of its extreme measures."

"The war was the saving of the South. Defeat and ruin brought more material prosperity to the South than to the North, and the future has untold advantages in store. This is the true reconstruction. Education is part of it, but capital and enterprise, which make men work, are the greater part. The Negro and poor white and, more than all, the old aristocrat are being saved by hard work, which, next to the grace of God, saves our souls. . . . Good sense and a love of fair play are, I believe, the ruling instincts at the South, but Southerners so dreadfully overdo the thing in dealing with the Negro! Where a mere show of force would answer they shoot half a dozen blacks, the whites usually not getting hurt. . . . The angry race feeling that crops out here and there between the races at the South is not the rule. But nearly 8,000,000 blacks among 12,000,000 unsympathetic whites will have some trouble and to some extent must and will be 'sat on' politically. Monkeying with power, whether in Hawaii or in the Sunny South, will end by the monkey losing a part or the whole of his tail."

In an address delivered at Williams College February, 1890, were these words:

"There is a great deal of misunderstanding on the part of the North regarding the South. The word South means a very large territory. You speak of the South as a whole as all bad; but in eight of the southern States it is admitted that there is no trouble, but they are held responsible for the acts of the others. In the other southern States there are occasional outrages, which are due largely to the peculiar temperament of the people; this the people of the North cannot understand. They cannot understand the peculiar relations of the Negroes to the whites. What would you do if you had this great preponderance of Negroes among you? You don't know. No one can know until it has been tried. The Negro is a great political and social element which has to be met by the South. It is not his political standing that makes the trouble, but his social standing."

In the years that elapsed between 1870 and 1890 a change came over many of his opinions concerning reconstruction. It will be remembered that while in the employ of the Freedmen's Bureau he heartily endorsed that policy in general, as became a loyal employee; later he saw that reconstruction measures had failed in certain radical ways, and characterized them as "a bridge of wood over a river of fire."

Yet to the basal fact of the reconstruction scheme he always gave unquestioning adherence. The granting of the suffrage to the Negroes was the starting-point of his work; since the Negro was a voter, he must be a worthy voter; to make the enfranchised colored man an honorable citizen was the best work for his country that General Armstrong

knew how to do. Without this corner-stone, the structures of education, thrift and morality which he was striving to rear rested on no assured basis; but for the privilege of the suffrage the Negro would be at the mercy of every unprincipled neighbor. His own words—not the words of a party man, for though voting with the Republican party in general he was far from confining his sympathies to the measures of that party—show his reasons for this attitude. In a reply to an article by Senator Wade Hampton, which argued that if a suffrage with educational qualifications had been granted when the question was first brought up it would have acted as an incentive to the Negroes to qualify themselves to vote, he wrote in 1888:

"How could they have qualified themselves, or who would have qualified them? Would their former masters have hastened to put an independent vote into their hands? What but the pressure of the very exigency of general suffrage has created the general sentiment for education and built up the common-school system in the South that is one of the marvels of the last twenty years?"

In a public address delivered in 1887, in words that perhaps express his opinions as clearly as any, he said:

"After all, being a citizen and a voter has more than anything else made the Negro a man. The recognition of his manhood has done much to create it. Political power is a two-edged sword which may cut both ways

and do as much harm as good. In the main, it has, I believe, been the chief developing force in the progress of the race. It is, however, probable that this would not have been so had it not been for the support of a surrounding white civilization which, though not always kind, has prevented the evils which would have resulted from an unrestricted black vote."

"The political experience of the Negro has been a great education to him. In spite of his many blunders and unintentional crimes against civilization, he is to-day more of a man than he would have been had he not been a voter. . . . Manhood is best brought out by recognition of it. Citizenship, together with the common school, is the great developing force in this country. It compels attention to the danger which it creates. There is nothing like faith in man to bring out the manly qualities."

"Suffrage furnished him [the Negro] with a stimulus which was terribly misused, but it has reacted and given him a training which it was out of the power of churches and schools to impart. The source of American intelligence is not so much the pedagogue as the system which gives each man a share in the conduct of affairs, leading him to think, discuss and act, and thus educating him quite as much by his failures as by his successes. Responsibility is the best educator."

From an editorial written in 1878:

"Hereafter it will be seen that Negro suffrage was a boon to the race, not so much for a defense, but as a tremendous fact that compelled its education. There is nothing to do but attempt its elevation in every possible way. In their pinching poverty the southern States have seized the question of Negro education

with a vigor that is the outcome of danger. The ex-slave would have sunk into practical serfdom not by oppression, but by stagnation of his mind. We have no reason to think that the South would have fitted him to vote, but now it must be done, and it will be done with an energy that is born of emergency. To universal suffrage in the South, more than to anything else, is due the existence of the strong and growing class of ex-slave-holders, who advocate free schools for all. Reason may appear to be in favor of limited suffrage; experience seems on the other side."

"The talk of disfranchisement is idle; it comes too late; the Negro is not what he was twenty-five years ago, and the next half-century will see great changes."

His yearly written observations of the progress and condition of the Negro race form a series of papers interesting both to the student of southern affairs and to one who is concerned with Samuel Armstrong's development, for here speaks the mature mind through the practised pen; here he indicates a method which he found to be adapted to the treatment of such vexed questions as the position of the Negro in the South, a method broad, impartial and reasonable. These extracts touch briefly on the social, moral, political, financial and educational situation among the Negroes. In a report to the trustees, written in 1886, he says:

"Party ties are loosening; personal interest and influence are more and more decisive in political action. Reasonably well assured that he is secure in the rights he has so far attained, the colored man has, in most of

the southern States, no longer serious anxiety on election days. I think that, on the whole, the Negroes are less devoted than formerly to politics, which are becoming the specialty of a few, and that our black population is forming itself into strata. The highest—that is, the best third or fourth—are progressing, gaining rapidly in education, property and character, while the lowest third or fourth are stationary in miserable conditions, or, worse still, are slowly sinking into lower depths. There is a large, well-behaved middle class who take life easily and work when they must; they are laborers and producers, and add much to the wealth of the country, but lack ambition, are careless of the future, and must be moved by forces from without rather than from within. The hope for them lies in the good management of landholders and employers of every kind and in the lifting influences of a practical Christian education.

"The earnest, capable schoolteacher can, both directly and through his pupils, instruct them in and inspire them to better things. The graduates of Hampton and other institutions during the last sixteen years have proved this. The black race is strikingly responsive to the influences about it. Its condition in the South corresponds to that of the surrounding whites; it shares in their prosperity or adversity, and has kept pace pretty well with the stronger race in the growth of 'the New South.'

"The Negroes just now need *light* more than *rights*. In their darkness they are, especially in the South, suffering untold evils from the credit or contract system, through which, partly by their own fault and partly from the advantage taken of them, tens and hundreds of thousands of them are kept in fixed and hopeless poverty, harder to bear than their former bondage.

Dismayed, they blindly seek some change, and their restless movements from point to point result now and then in an 'exodus,' where there is always the possibility of some new development. Imposed upon by others, helpless under their own appetites and passions, they appeal to our sympathies more than do those who are literally blind, for we must never forget that they are in no sense responsible for their own ignorance.

"The recent temperance agitation under 'local option' laws passed by various southern States, Georgia leading, is a most hopeful sign. Experience has proven the success of prohibition in country regions, and the southern population is largely in the country. While not hard drinkers, the blacks very generally drink, and keep themselves poor by the yearly consumption of the value of thousands of farms and homes. To-day they need emancipation from whisky as much as twenty years ago they needed it from their task-masters, but I count upon prohibition only as one weapon among many which should be used in fighting this battle. It is not political pressure, but moral inspiration, which will gain the day, and it is only as the former is used as a means to an end that I can give it my hearty support."

And in 1889:

"As might be expected, the popular talk about the Negro is all in a hopeless key; but to the direct questions, 'Are the laborer's pigs and poultry and crops safer than ten years ago? Are the loafer and thief more likely to get their due? Are the Negroes inclined to get homesteads?' the answer is usually 'Yes.'

"There are unquestionably multitudes of 'low-

down' Negroes and many wretched neighborhoods, but I think that intelligent white men everywhere in the South admit that the line between the good and the bad is every year more distinctly drawn—a sure proof of progress. The gain was never so rapid as now, thanks to Negro pluck and purpose and to the stern discipline of their past, which developed qualities beyond the power of schools alone to create; and this basis of hope is, I believe, beyond the reach of any political pressure. Increasing enterprise at the South and the new industrial life of the people are helpful conditions, and where they are supplemented by education are pushing the better part of the Negro race into prosperity, giving them a place and making them a power.

"As prosperity creates social distinctions, political divisions will follow, and the human nature of both races may be trusted to adjust the relations which are indeed to-day generally amicable. In those localities where lawlessness and injustice have repelled capital and immigration, the penalty of impoverishment is the swift result and Government can do little; the people must finish the work of reconstruction.

"I believe there is no such illustration on record of the law of compensation as is to be found in the history of the Negro race. More has been given them than has been taken away. Hard knocks have driven them forward. 'Development under difficulties' seems to be their law of progress, and this is their heroic age. Indulgence has demoralized the Indian, while harshness has strengthened the Negro; our black boys could not afford to have their path made too easy. As I look at the life of the average white college student, I know that our young men could not stand the ordeal of so much prosperity, any more than the former could endure

the strain which develops our Hampton boys. The Negro's 'speed,' so to speak, is more rapid than that of the white student, becaues he still feels the momentum always associated with the first period of growth; but this, rightly measured, is in no sense deceptive. There is no doubt that against the Negro can be arrayed a formidable phalanx of discouraging facts, but the weight of evidence is finally in his favor, and we have a right to our enthusiasm. Without it, indeed, we should poorly serve the cause for which we stand, for nothing so cripples a worker as a burden of grievances, and our strength is in our belief that the providential guidance of the Negro is as manifest to-day as it ever was."

General Armstrong gained his impressions of the South and the Negroes both from conversation and contact with many hundred young colored people at the Hampton school and from trips taken through the South for the purpose of informing himself concerning the real condition of their people. While on these tours he traveled incognito, as it were; for no one would suspect the northern philanthropist in the soldierly, keen-eyed man, dressed in a rather baggy gray suit and black slouched hat. Indeed, his type of face resembled rather that of the Englishman of action, so that unsuspected he was able to converse freely with men of all sorts everywhere, interrogating with equal interest the station loafer—while the train made the leisurely halts peculiar to southern railways—or the more cultivated travelers within the coaches.

The following extracts from letters written to his school paper describe impressions of South Carolina in 1887; they show in some detail his method of obtaining information about the South, and present pictures of contrasting sides of southern life, now overhung by a threatening cloud of political confusion, now lightened by increasing thrift and prosperity:

"COLUMBIA, South Carolina, January, 1887.

"Through the kindness of ex-Governor Thompson, of this State, I had the most pleasant access to his genial successor, Governor Richardson, whose appreciation of the importance of the Negro question is deep; only thinking, responsible men in situations like his can so realize it, and he gave much time to its discussion. . . .

"In the entire State there is a black majority of about 50,000. It is a postulate of politics that this majority shall not rule the State. Its record of corrupt, extravagant, high-handed control for eight years was far worse for the State than the period of the war, which destroyed the people's prosperity but did not hurt their manhood. The general demoralization during the rule of the blacks was unspeakably bad; civilization could hardly stand up before it. The Negroes were not to blame when the expenses of one session of the Legislature amounted to $1,100,000—the worst year of all (the Legislature now just closed, after a thirty-day session, cost but $53,000); they were led into mischief by unscrupulous white men.

"A better feeling between the races is setting in. The Governor's plantations are in the black country, where there is security for all. Negroes are tried by

jurors of their own race, but frequently prefer white ones. A black man's poverty never prevents his having able counsel in criminal cases. Some years ago dread of the incendiary was a widespread terror. Now the whites feel secure in the densest black surroundings. Nearly every Negro is a church member and has no opinion at all of the white man's religion, but morally he is very weak and needs more than anything else improvement at this point. This is the problem of his education. How shall it be accomplished?

. . . . . .

"My knowledge of things having been gained so far from Democratic sources, I found (in Charleston) a Negro Republican who is held in high estimation in the community and seemed a clear-headed, reliable man. He said that there are colored policemen in the community as high as the grade of lieutenant; that one-third of the paid fire department of the city is colored; that colored people on steamboats and railroads in this State have first-class seats when they pay the price. I noticed myself that a tidy, respectable class of colored people ride in the 'ladies' car,' and that only rough-looking ones were in the smoking car. The truth is that the entire Republican legislation on the civil rights of the blacks remains unaltered; much of it, however, is a dead letter. My informant said that the Negro vote is practically abolished, and at the last election only half the whites voted. . . . He himself used to believe in universal suffrage, but did so no longer, from his experience of the ruinous taxation under Republican rule which made some colored men of property favor the election of Governor Hampton, of which he was glad. His taxes have been reduced from $77 to $22 a year. . . . He was not satisfied with the condition of the black voter, but 'what could

be done?' He thought the whites could, if they tried, divide the Negro vote.

"I think the Negroes of South Carolina will not suffer much from not voting—perhaps on the whole they are improving—and that they are unspeakably better off than when in power, but that, however, the principles of popular government in the State are in peril, and that real democracy may be going to destruction. An undue Congressional and electoral power is gained. Tampering with men's right to vote is most dangerous. Many who see nothing else to do speak of it with the deepest concern. I had no idea that this sentiment existed. All seems quite well now, but thinking men are thinking. They see that there is a black cloud over the future, and nowhere else is this better appreciated. . . . There appears to be a general feeling that an unimpeded Negro majority could repeat the terrible work of former years. . . . Men talk earnestly but not bitterly about it, with most kind and friendly feeling toward the blacks. The true thing for us to do is to put ourselves in their places. What would we do if there? Only a Pharisee could be boastful. The only hope for the future is a vigorous effort to elevate the colored race. The only way out of it all is by admitting every thoughtful man to education—practical education that shall fit them for life. To let things go on indefinitely as they are will, I believe, in the end prove as disastrous to local civilization as was the reign of ignorance; for by a longer, slower way it will at last lead to anarchy.

"Beaufort, South Carolina, is the region where the finest cotton in the world is grown; is the center of Negro politics in this State and one of the strongholds of the black man in the South. This place, Port Royal Island, and the other sea islands along the coast, are

owned chiefly by Negroes, who outnumber the whites about ten to one, and who, through aid of the tax sales of the war period, were enabled to buy small farms of from ten to twenty acres at a very low rate. They are steadily buying more. The great majority live in their own homes. There is, I think, no Negro population in this country just so situated. There are many similarly located on the mainland close by, making a domain of blacks which in an interesting way illustrates a phase of the problem of this race. . . .

"Showing me a very strong statement from a reporter of a northern paper about the stealing done by colored employees, a member of the firm of J. J. Dale & Company, who do the largest business in the sea islands in ginning cotton, said that fifteen years' experience in buying cotton from the Negroes had taught the firm that not over five per cent. of them would cheat by adding water, salt or sand or overweighing the cotton in any way, and but one in twenty cheats in business dealings. With 100 women employees in the gin-house, and constant opportunity to steal cotton, there is not two per cent. loss of stock. Dale & Company have eight large stores on these islands, have no one especially to watch their goods, and have had little loss.

"Tax and crown land can be bought to an unlimited extent for $1.25 per acre on which the Negroes can dig out a living. . . . I saw six considerable stores in three blocks of the principal street kept by Negroes. They have worked into the business life of the place and fill quite a number of important offices of trust and honor —and nobody is hurt. The whites as a class are far ahead, but the Negro movement—or *tendency*—is a healthy and encouraging one. There was more neatness than I had expected to find in the many little homes I looked into; the floors were universally clean; the

buildings were often mere shells. Many have complained of these people's labor. I had a two hours' drive with Mr. Johnson, a white man, a pineapple planter, etc., who has had great experience through a long life with this labor and was well satisfied with it. He knew what was reasonable to expect, what allowance to make, and did a very large and successful business. As everywhere else, the unsuccessful man must have his scapegoat, and it is very convenient to blame the black man.

"There is a large Negro population in this State with little or no political organization. There is no agitation and little voting on their part; there is peace; the lamb lies down beside the lion. A leading educator of the Negro race told me in the presence of a prominent Democrat that the three blackest parishes or counties of Louisiana, wholly officered and controlled by Negroes elected by the people, are among the best governed and most orderly in the State. Here is evidence that Negro majorities in exercise of their right to vote do not always make for unrighteousness. The Southerner admitted the statement, but said that the whites there have the wealth and give bonds for the colored officers, refusing to back up any in whom they have no confidence, and this keeps out bad men. This was admitted. It was refreshing to find that the races could live together so well."

General Armstrong's belief that the country, since it had taken from the Negro his former means of support, owed him a chance to make his way, caused him to give his warm support for many years to the principle of national aid to Negro education. But before the year 1887 his feeling on this point underwent some modification, owing to the effective

way in which the southern States, headed by Virginia, were taking up the public-school education of their own black children, and owing also to a growing conviction that any aid granted by the National Government would be poorly administered by the politicians through whose hands it must inevitably pass.

He wrote concerning national aid to Negro education, and especially of the Blair bill, as follows:

"The nation which freed and enfranchised 4,000,000 slaves, thereby creating most serious and dangerous political conditions, has felt its responsibility, and has from time to time attempted to do something toward cultivating the intelligence and moral sense of its new-made citizens. The Blair bill is the last expression of this feeling and has failed.

"Unquestionably a better measure might have been prepared. Too much was asked for in too short a time, and this mistake gave some justification to the cry of 'pauperizing the South.' The $15,000,000 given by northern charity for southern, chiefly Negro, education has had a tremendous mental and moral result. The $3,500,000 of Government money used by the educational department of the Freedmen's Bureau between 1865 and 1870 was the means of teaching nearly 1,000,000 black children to read and write. It did broad foundation work for the institutions which were to follow it. In my opinion, wise and legitimate means can be found for using national aid against that worst enemy of republics, an ignorant population. The need of it for the enormous mass of illiterate blacks

and whites is unquestionable; there is danger in neglect of them, and we who know what the trouble of the past has been see the trouble ahead and feel that the worst is yet to come."

As the foregoing quotation shows, a wise measure, avoiding what he thought to be the errors of this bill, but directed to the same end, would have found a supporter in him. The agricultural colleges suggested by Senator Morrill approached nearer to his idea of what such a measure should be than any other. These, he thought, might become the starting-point for a larger development of the industrial idea for Negroes under State or national auspices:

"Senator Morrill's agricultural colleges have done more for the Negroes in the South than all the New England Senators and Congressmen combined ever did by legislation. . . .

"His agricultural college measures have been the best ever passed for our ex-slaves, for they make some provision for the practical education needed by the Negro that should fit him to earn a good living and get a home of his own. Able to do this, his vote is sure to be counted. United States troops are not needed to guard his approach to the ballot-box; but there is greatly needed a thorough system of agricultural schools, costing much less than armed men, among the southern blacks and some classes of whites. The entire country approves public expenditures made for agricultural colleges. Party men North and South write in support of it. Why not establish under the Department of Agriculture at Washington a system of

industrial schools that shall reach every Congressional district in the South?"

All his experience and the continued observation of years only led him closer to his fundamental and first idea—namely, that the great need of the Negroes was character, expressed in thrift, industry and moral living, and that the only way to supply this need was found in a system of industrial combined with mental education.

CHAPTER X

Work for the Indian

"The Negro makes public sentiment, but public sentiment makes the Indian. . . . The elevation of the Indians is clearly possible and is dependent on the will of the people; their failure will be more the white man's failure than their own."

General Armstrong took every opportunity to urge upon the people of the country, by public address, by magazine or newspaper articles, or by personal conversation, this view of the Indian question. He threw the force of his personality and influence into the work of convicting the conscience of the nation of criminal negligence toward the red men. The remedy for their troubles lay, he thought, in enlisting in their behalf a large and influential body of friends who would zealously guard their interests, enforce wise legislation, expose underhanded Congressional action, and contribute money where it was needed for their education or improvement.

"Will the red men finally have a constituency of faithful friends, like that of the blacks, who will steadily support the educational work for them?" he asks. "The Government is as good as the people will let it be;

to scold about the Indian policy is idle and useless. There is need of combined effort that shall press upon our legislators their duty to the red race, and persistently work for them at their own homes."

General Armstrong was able to bring this view into wider prominence than heretofore. His dramatic instinct that seized upon striking facts for relation, his readiness with a practical solution of immediate difficulties, his burning eagerness to help the unfortunate, and the wide circle of friends already interested in his work made him a most valuable acquisition to the ranks of the friends of the Indian.

It will be remembered that a few of that race had come to the Hampton school in 1878, sent from barracks in St. Augustine, Florida, where they were held as prisoners of war. Since that time the Government had granted a fixed sum yearly for the support of a limited number, and a group of Indians numbering about 150 had become a part of the Hampton school.

That institution was peculiarly adapted to the training of Indians, owing to the fact that English was the language of instruction and conversation, and also in no small measure to the steady tone created by 500 hard-working and loyal Negro students. "Sending Indians to a Negro school is like putting raw recruits into an old regiment," said General Armstrong. The moral atmosphere at Hampton, too, he felt to be essential to Indian development. "Their education should

be first for the heart, then for health, and last for the mind," he said. That an individual Indian should be civilized was barely, from his point of view, worth the expenditure of money and energy bestowed on it at Hampton; but that each Indian should feel under obligation to pass on to his people the benefits he had received was a result worthy of the best effort. Hampton could create the desire for service, the sense of moral obligation in the Negro, and why not, he thought, in the Indian?

"Pupils should be taught that they have a duty to their people, that education is more than a preparation for their own support and decent living, but that they have a great work which they must begin by writing home; they must expect to teach by precept and example, the more excellent way."

"The Indians are grown-up children," said he. "We are a thousand years ahead of them in the line of development. Education is not progress, but is a means of it. A brain full of book knowledge, whose physical basis is the product of centuries of barbarism, is an absurdity that we do not half realize, from our excessive traditional reverence for school and college training. We forget that knowledge is not power unless it is digested and assimilated. Savages have good memories; they acquire, but do not comprehend; they devour, but do not digest knowledge. They have no conception of mental discipline. A well-balanced mind is attained only after centuries of development."*

"The very atmosphere of civilization is a revelation to them. Respectability here is in the air; it is a habit;

* "Indian Education in the East." A speech delivered in 1880.

you inherit it; it is the fashion and it pays. Among savages, degradation is in the air and in the blood; it is customary and comfortable, almost universal, and virtue is a cross instead of a crown. The civilized man is honest not because he is good, but because it pays to be honest; but it took ten generations to find it out. Not till a race comprehends the practical bearing of integrity will it practise it. Knowing it is not comprehending it."

He often compared the two races as they mingled in the school life of Hampton:

"The severe discipline of slavery strengthened a weak race. Professed friendship for a strong one has weakened it. A cruel semblance of justice has done more harm than direct oppression could have done. The Negro is strong, the Indian weak, because the one is trained to labor and the other is not. I am told that the ex-slaves of the Indian Territory are now much more prosperous than their former red-skinned owners. One has had too little and the other too much freedom. Both are now eager to improve; both will make the most of their opportunities for practical education. Both have capacity to become citizens and perform all practical duties. With both the question of progress is only one of opportunities to provide and then settle the question."

"The surroundings of the ex-slave are far more sympathetic and helpful than those of our western wards, whose large possessions and resultant relations to the neighboring country have created many complicated questions. The war, with its terrible possibilities, has resulted in peace and good-will among all our people, while a hundred years of well-meaning policy toward

the Indians have just brought us to a measure which recognizes their manhood." *

"Civilizing Indians and Negroes together is novel, but hopeful, and it keeps us busy; it is very stimulating, for success is not to be taken for granted. We shall see." †

He never perceived that it was more the influence of his own personality than any other force at Hampton that tended to make responsible beings out of those Indian boys and girls just raising themselves from barbarism. He commanded their admiration where they would have passed by with scant notice many men equally well intentioned and able. They could understand the language of flashing eye and quick gesture, as they remained at Hampton. They could soon understand also the simple questions which he put to his audiences, and it was as often, in proportion, that an Indian answered them as a Negro. They enjoyed mightily the scenery, the soft blue waters, and the passing boats; the songs of the Negroes with their passionate rhythms and martial choruses stirred them to the quick. General Armstrong planned wisely when he admitted them to the heart of his work; it was heart more than intellectual cultivation that they needed, and Hampton was essentially for many years an expression in brick and mortar, in flesh and blood, of General Armstrong's own inner self.

While at Hampton they gained a general knowl-

* "Indian Education in the East."
† Address, "The Future of the American Negro," delivered at Omaha, 1887.

edge of several trades, and most of them acquired a mastery of one. Their work at school was planned in such a way as to fit them to repair their own homes, to build their own carts and tools, or to engage in some occupation for self-support. General Armstrong thought that this manual work, which was carried on under instruction and was obligatory on every Indian boy, even more essential to them than to the Negroes. Owing to their inherited nomadic instincts a distaste for labor was common among them, but in the changed conditions prevailing at their western homes they must now either go to work or go to the wall; and half recognizing this alternative, they received their enforced industrial education with composure.

The test of work for the Indians General Armstrong felt to be not what they received at school, but their record on their return home. As he said:

"The question is no longer, Can the Indian be civilised? but, What becomes of the civilized Indian? The Indians are where they are; a few may be taken away, educated, and live among the whites, but only a few; this will barely touch, but not settle the Indian question. The work to be done is yet at the reservation."

It has long been the policy of the Government to group Indians within defined tracts known as "reservations," each of which is presided over by an agent appointed by the President. Each agency contains one or more schools which provide for the

education of Indian children, and a depot of supplies from which each adult can draw a certain ration, including both necessities and luxuries, free of charge. Since the year 1887 this policy has been supplemented by the provisions of the Dawes Land in Severalty bill.*

General Armstrong took many trips among the reservations in order to ascertain with his own eyes what were the conditions in the midst of which his returned pupils were to live. He found much in western life that differed from the current western and eastern opinion of it, saying:

"If the West knows anything, it knows that you can't improve the prairie Indian. Crossing the continent twice of late, I found the universal creed to be, 'There is no good Indian but a dead one,' which has been adopted by over half the intelligent people of the East." †

These tours were taken in the company of friends or of some chance traveling companion; and in riding or driving over the prairies from one reservation to another, often camping at night, he found pleasant reminiscences of army life and gained fresh strength. Of one of these tours, half for rest and pleasure, half for purposes of observation, he writes:

* The Dawes Land in Severalty bill provided that any Indian expressing a wish to take up land in individual ownership should have 160 acres apportioned to him from the reservation for his own private use, inalienable for twenty-five years. By taking up this land he became a citizen of the United States.

† "Indian Education in the East."

"The weather has been cool and our gallops over the plains in the midst of surrounding mountains have been exhilarating. Such appetites as we have had! The memory of feasts of brook trout, black-tailed deer, wild duck, ending with flapjacks and maple syrup, will not soon fade. The hunter of our party is the Harvard graduate. Our ex-Confederate captain has a genius for making tea—the charm of such life makes every camp seem the pleasantest of all. Whenever we gather around the blazing fire near some river or on the edge of the woods and the sun is setting in glory and the plain stretches far away till it meets a distant mountain, we think we have never found it so pleasant before."

And of one especial trip:

"A three hours' drive over this [Devil's Lake] reservation was one of my most encouraging and inspiring experiences of Indian life and progress. In every direction as far as the eye could reach, except where the ground was broken and wooded, were dotted log houses, beside each one a *tipi*, or conical tent, of smoke-browned cotton cloth, graceful and picturesque, where in summer the Indians cook and sometimes live. Of the 1,000 people 210 are farmers, heads of families, scattered over the reserve just as white men would be settled, cultivating from 100 to 200 acres apiece. . . .

"The climax of my experience was in seeing a McCormick self-binder and reaper driven with two horses by an Indian farmer around splendid fields of yellow grain. All I could say was: 'This is the end of it.' True, the red man does not put in his full day's work like the white man, and does not hesitate to take a good long midday rest; but then, he is on his own reaping-machine, harvesting the fruits of his own labor,

which he takes to the agency mill to be ground and brings back in flour.

"I can never forget this afternoon's drive among the Indian farms. The air was perfect, every breath a delight; far and near fields of grain were waving in the wind, while the slant rays of the setting sun made their surfaces glisten like jewels as they rose and fell under the soft touch of the breeze. The redeemed, disenthralled and regenerate Indian, guiding the complicated, brainy machine—one of forty on the reservation, each as a rule bought by two or three men together—seemed fairly established in manhood. The hard work is done. . . ."

He saw all sides of life among the Indians, and appreciated the strength as well as the weakness of their surviving savage customs. From Standing Rock Agency, Dakota, he wrote:

"The picturesqueness of Indian life was at its climax when we went to see a modified 'grass dance' (all others being suppressed), now allowed once in two weeks in the afternoon. An outer circle some hundred feet in diameter was formed of onlookers of both sexes, within which sat on their heels about eighty braves in full ball costume ready to spring to the center at the sound of the drum and chorus of men and squaws whose quaint barbaric cadences, alternating with stirring staccato cries, in perfect time, seemed to inspire the dancers as much as any orchestra could the civilized votaries of this pleasure. . . . All chant or sing or shout, while strings of innumerable small bells on arm and leg and body make a tremendous tinkling as the dancers go madly round, now erect, now in a bending posture,

imitating the various attitudes of the hunter or warrior. After about five minutes of these wild doings, all fall back to their places and squat for a while. The leader rises and explains something or recites the exploits or generosity of somebody, and they all go at it again. A fire was lighted, and the performance of the curiously costumed, painted, plumed, richly feathered, splendidly built half savages was weird and brilliant as they pranced around it. I cannot see that the severest criticism of moralists and satirists on civilized ball-rooms would apply here. The dance was out of doors, and the whole scene as the sun went down—the infinite prairie beyond, the gumbo hills in one direction, the Missouri River winding away to the left, the glory of color in the west, the strained, intense and brilliant action before us—made it all seem like another world. Unpicturesque civilization will conquer all this. One's mystic instincts are singularly awakened in the remote West. Nature and her spirit are felt here as nowhere else."

His mature observations of the system of caring for Indians adopted by the Government led him to certain fixed conclusions, both as to the evils and the benefits of the system and as to the means by which it could be improved. He regarded the system of distributing rations to the Indians which was in vogue between 1880 and 1890 as thoroughly wrong. Many Indians, he saw, were obliged to travel long distances, leaving their work at home in order to reach the distributing stations. When arrived at the agency they met a number of other idle braves, awaiting their turn, so that the agency

became a breeding-place for vice and gossip. Now that the buffalo and the salmon, the natural food supply of the wild tribes, were gone, some aid must be given to the Indian, but he thought that it should be in the form of farm tools, or, if rations must be allowed at all, that they should be given as a reward of merit.

Here lay the fundamental economic error of the Government policy—that the alternative of work or starvation, which spurs on the white man to effort, does not exist for the Indian.

"This endowment of food and land without work is like a millstone around his neck," he said.

"The thousand Sioux at Devil's Lake Agency, Dakota, have in three years been all brought near to the point of self-support, because (by a special provision) they were fed and helped only as they worked. The rest of the Sioux are worse off than ever, for the lazy and intractable among them fare as well as any, and it would be better to destroy than to emasculate them.

"The treaties that provide food, etc., for Indians state most emphatically that education and ultimate self-support are their end. But this result is put farther off than ever. . . . It would be right, I believe, to deny to lazy, intractable Indians at least sugar, coffee and tobacco—the luxuries, letting them have beef, flour, etc., until they should do better. Remarkable results, which I have personally witnessed, were wrought among the Shoshone Indians in this way. Looking at this great pauperizing system, which has no parallel in our time, which would make a mob of the poor of our cities and is ruinous to the red man, I believe that

any revolution in our Indian management is desirable that would change it to a generous, fair help of the Indians, . . . putting wise pressure on the idle and thriftless."

He believed that the reservation system contained the germ of the wisest care of the Indians possible under the then existing conditions.

"I am convinced of the truth," he said, "that reservations under good management afford the best conditions to prepare the red race for citizenship—develop, not destroy them."

To find the desired good management for the reservations General Armstrong thought the most difficult task for the reformer. He advocated strongly the appointment of army officers to the post of Indian agents:

"Civilian agents (excepting a few too valuable ever to lose to the cause) are a failure, with which the parsimony of Congress in giving meager salaries has had much to do. A plan should be devised which shall give to competent men the details of the difficult, delicate task of Indian civilization, never to be accomplished while a legislative body attempts executive work. The most natural and simple way is to make the Commissioner of Indian Affairs an independent, responsible officer at the head of a department, with ample discretion; and to create an educational bureau, with a strong man at its head. The present superintendent of Indian education barely appears as a factor to the problem.

"The fact that army experience is so much at the

basis of Indian education in the East is significant, for it can do just as well in the West. There is a class of men in the army, now that its fighting days are over, who can be spared to help settle the Indian question and are better than any other for the purpose; because they are, and only so far as they are, educated, experienced men of high character and capacity, they have many advantages of position."

NOTE.—It is interesting to note that since General Armstrong's death (in 1893) the experiment of employing army officers as agents has been tried, but without the success which he hoped for. His reason for advocating their trial was that he felt them to be men of more tried character than the available civilian, but the younger generation of officers, unschooled in Indian warfare, proved unsatisfactory to the friends of the Indians.

The difficulties attending the constant change of administration in agencies and schools under our political system were very great.

"Politicians have faintly comprehended and sadly muddled wise work for the Indian," he said, "and with good intentions have made the best men reluctant to take hold of their education.

"I find the Government schools are generally good, suffering, however, from frequent change of teachers, which means inexperience and occasionally worse than that. The denominational schools have a marked advantage in the character of their teachers and because the religious element cannot be safely omitted from any attempt to educate the Indian. They are also a valuable stimulus to the Government schools, furnishing in many cases church facilities and influences, of which the latter often avail themselves, while they create a moral atmosphere which is a tonic to whole communities."

In a private letter written in 1889 he says:

"General conditions more than schools have, I think, moved the Indian, but best of all, behind all and more than all, missionary work has helped the Indian, and only in relation with that in the West can we expect much good from our eastern work."

But with all the good work that the missionary schools were doing, and with all the stimulus that well-managed reservation life might afford, there would always be a few young men and women who would profit by an eastern education:

"They will not return home scared by our great guns and arsenals, but stimulated by contact with the spirit that lies at the bottom of our progress—the spirit of hard work. They must see civilization to comprehend it." *

Acting on this belief, he sent West yearly some representative deputed to collect a few young men and women who gave promise of ability to act as leaders and teachers; returning the best of them to their homes in the course of three, four or five years, acquainted with civilized ways, able to earn their living and ambitious to serve their people.

In general, he says:

"The situation is far from hopeless; from my own point of view it is encouraging, but it does not admit of much delay in action. No honest man can touch

* "Indian Education in the East."

Indian affairs at any point without at first a sense of humiliation, a consciousness of defeat before he takes up arms, which is by no means so illogical an experience as it sounds. There are no precedents; we have nothing to trust to but the common sense of those with whom the power lies. And yet every day sees a change in the direction of development rather than of decay.

"Apply sanctified common sense to the Indian problem, and you will save them in spite of the steam-engine and the threats of fate." *

"To stop the issue of rations, introducing in its place some reasonable system of assistance similar to that already tested among the Sioux; to complete the surveys of the Indian lands, through trustworthy and capable men who will minimize the inevitable danger; to improve and increase the facilities for education, especially in industrial lines and under Christian influences—these are the demands which the Indian would make for himself if he knew his own needs." †

With the passage of the Dawes bill granting land in severalty with prospective citizenship a new era for the Indian dawned. Before that time General Armstrong would have had all the energies of the public directed toward the formulation by Congress of a definite and wise Indian policy which should ultimately result in citizenship and large educational measures for the Indians. The Dawes bill once passed, he believed that a conscientious and skilled administration of its provisions, a work almost purely executive, was the end to be sought.

* "Indian Education in the East."

† Letter to *Southern Workman.*

As a permanent educational policy to be followed for the benefit of the Indians, he believed that normal industrial education in the East for a chosen few and many agency schools under religious influences in the West were the measures most needed, and to the pleading of these causes he gave much of the best effort of his maturer years.

CHAPTER XI

Last Years. 1893

The year 1890 was recognized by Armstrong as a turning-point in his life. In his annual report he speaks of the accomplishment of the main objects for which he had striven for twenty years—namely, the recognition of the necessity for industrial training for backward races and of the moral value of coeducation and productive labor for the Negroes, and the building up of Hampton so that it was able to do its work as an "experiment station." Hampton had but a small endowment, it was true, but it had a large circle of faithful friends and an enviable reputation. "No man ever realized his ideals more fully than I have," he said.

In the fall of 1890 he was married to Miss Mary Alice Ford, of Lisbon, New Hampshire, who for some years had been a teacher at Hampton, an event which opened again to him a possibility of home life. A sense of attainment and of the honor that crowns successful effort now came pleasantly to him, and was augmented by a visit to his old home in the Hawaiian Islands in the summer of 1891. It was not his first return home. In 1881 he had taken a trip thither for rest and refreshment, and had returned, bring-

ing with him across the continent half a dozen sugar-cane stalks and several cocoanuts, in order that his little girls might taste his favorite eatables in a condition approaching their natural freshness; but now he went in more serious vein to deliver a speech at the fiftieth anniversary of his old school, Punahou, to bid farewell to his mother, who, now eighty-seven years old and feeble, was living quietly at San José, California, and to show to his daughters, who accompanied him, some of the scenes and friends of his youth. Nevertheless, it was a time of jollity, rest and triumphal recognition of his work by his contemporaries, and he returned from it in the fall of 1891 to take up his work with fresh vigor and his new-found home life, brightened by the birth of a daughter in October, with delight.

But the physical refreshment proved to be only temporary; a strange fatigue began to creep over him.* On November 27th, while delivering a speech at Stoneham, Massachusetts, he succumbed to a shock of paralysis and for several weeks lay at the Parker House, Boston, very near death's door.

He was quite conscious of his danger, and may sometimes have wished, as he must die at last, to go quickly then, for he had always had the natural desire of a strong man to die without a weakening

* This was accompanied, however, with a sort of mental stimulation. It is related of him that only a few nights before the collapse he talked with two friends in New York more brilliantly with a display of wit more pyrotechnic and an insight deeper than ever before.

of his powers—"in harness," as his own father had died. Nevertheless, he determined to get well, announced that what had befallen him was for the best, as everything always was, and worked as vigorously to gain strength as he had worked to build up Hampton. In course of time he was moved back to Hampton, and there gradually grew able to pull himself upstairs or to be wheeled over the grounds as rapidly as he could persuade his Negro attendant to push him. In these days of enforced leisure his figure became a very familiar one to the boys in the workshops as he rolled quickly up, signalled with his cane to stop, and sat, the black coat dropping over shoulders no longer able to hold it squarely and black slouched hat pulled over his eyes. Here he would sit cheerfully talking with students and foremen many a fine forenoon. As a general thing, he went to his office and assumed the care of his correspondence for a part of the day, sitting, when not called upon to make an effort, quite silent, concentrating all his strength on this his last fight—a fight not with kindly death, but with powers that threatened to fail him before certain self-appointed tasks were done.

For a year and a half the struggle against physical weakness went on. In the fall of 1893 he took up his routine work at the school, but the continuous effort proved exhausting and he was forced to go South for three months, to return in the early spring only slightly benefited by the trip, though a

visit to Tuskegee Institute and the birth of a son during the spring made the time a memorable one.

It was the time of the rendezvous of the fleets of all nations prior to the naval review of 1893 in New York Harbor. He had organized, as was his wont, excursions and sailing parties among them. On the night before the fleets were to leave the harbor he chartered a tug and sloop, invited a party of friends, and made a tour of the silent fleet. They stopped before each battle-ship, towering black in the starlight, with only a watch pacing to and fro to be seen, and as the boat drifted past the singers sang the national airs of each vessel (which they had learned in preparation for some such occasion), followed by some of their own quaint, stirring choruses. The effect was magical: from bow to stern white-clad figures poured out in the blaze of electric lights, and the serenaders were greeted with hearty cheers and thanks. General Armstrong sat silent all the while in the stern of the tug, wrapped, as usual, in his cape, his snowy hair gleaming, in the half light, over deep-set eyes full of tears which he could not control. Time was, and his spirit was as young as then, when he would have been leading the songs and cheers on the sloop.

The next day was fixed for the departure of the ships, and from far and near the people gathered to watch the spectacle. Armstrong rose at six o'clock, drove several miles to Old Point Comfort, and chose

a seat in the top of a lighthouse, whose steep stairs he climbed with laboring steps, to witness the magnificent scene. It was a sunny morning in May. The foreign ships, each escorted by one of our own White Squadron, rounded Old Point Comfort, turned and headed for the ocean, each as she passed the saluting guns of Fortress Monroe playing her national air, which mingled over the blue waters with the strains of our own national songs played by bands on shore.

That night he was stricken with symptoms which could only presage death. During the intervals of comparative freedom from pain he sat in his chair overlooking the waters near him and the school grounds, but gazed only at the passing boats; he made no inquiry concerning school matters, and said decisively between his long hours of silence: "My work is done. I must go." He wished and prayed only to die, and on May 11th his desire was fulfilled.

After a military funeral, his body was laid, by his own request, among those of his students, Negro and Indian, who had died at the school, and the spot was marked by a block of Williamstown granite at the one end and Hawaiian volcano rock at the other.

General Armstrong's spirit still lives in his work, a spirit and a work not for his own time alone, but for all time; not for the Negro and Indian only, but for races yet to be born.

He lived, mentally and spiritually, in a world of immaterial things, though his daily contact was with the most practical sides of life. All through his crude youthful years he was maturing a deeper conviction that spiritual facts were the only realities. As he grew older this deeply spiritual, almost mystic tone became dominant in him, and in his later years he became, as has well been said, "a sort of saint." * He was drawn toward the immaterial side of everything; was interested in all forms of belief which emphasized the power of mind over matter; enjoyed reading Thomas à Kempis and the lives of the fathers of the Church. His favorite philosophers were Plato and Amiel, and among his most treasured books was a copy of Amiel's Journal, which he filled with markings and often read of a quiet Sunday afternoon; though this philosophical tendency never disturbed his robust common sense, for he never forgot that men and things must be dealt with as they are, not as they might be. He wrote:

"The longer I live, the less I think and fear about what the world calls success; the more I tremble for true success, for the perfection and beauty of the inner life, for the purity and sanctity of the soul, which is as a temple. As I grow older I feel the need of getting at the root of the matter—of being sure of the nearness of God, of being free from all the mistiness and doubts and of throwing the increasing cares of life on Him."

* John H. Dennison in *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1894.

Prayer was his meat and drink; he spent a tenth of his busiest days at prayer:

"After all, prayer is a mystery; but this we do know, that looking back upon our lives and remembering what we have asked for, we can say that all the real good we have asked for has been granted. When Christ repeated 'And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son,'* He spoke as the holy and pure One whose 'whatsoever' could not refer to all sorts of things, for that would be absurd, but to the whole range of heavenly gifts which He doubtless will give away to those who ask aright, but in His good time and in a way that we may not discern till long after the gift.

"One scripture is to be interpreted by another; a clear head and common sense are, I believe, the best means of right study of the Bible, and hence the reason why so many illiterates—even babes—speak and see wondrous things, while we who are more cultivated bring our reasoning powers to bear and are sadly perplexed. I think, too, that the state of the heart has as much to do with getting at the more intricate Bible truths as that of the head. It is true there is a difficulty as to prayer; God knows and does all, yet asks us to pray for what we want; there is in the compound or complex action of this and the human will on the wants of life an absolute mystery; I cannot explain it, but elsewhere He says: 'I will give you rest.' We need the spirit of little children. The moment we begin to search into the mysteries of God's truths we are bewildered. Yet because truth comes from God we should expect not to comprehend it."

*I. John, xiv. 13.

His thoughts were often directed toward the next life:

"Body and trees decay, but each expresses a thought of God that continues to be expressed in consecrated forms. A large amount of the happiness of the next life will, I take it, be mental, and none keener than the perception of identities. Do we do justice to this wonderful source of delight—I mean the noble mental occupations of the next world? I look upon much sincere pious writing about heaven as little more reliable than 'old wives' fables.'

"I sometimes wonder how Paradise can be Paradise simply because it *is* Paradise. It is the end of the long, toilsome journey. But man was made to act, not to rest. Yet here he longs for it. 'Rest' is the sweetest word in our language. But there is no fatigue there.

"No wonder that tireless, vigilant, splendid soldier, General Stonewall Jackson, as he was dying said: 'Let's cross over the river and rest under the shade of the trees!'

"But when we get there—what? Really lying off after a moral victory in this earthly strife? No! We will soon realize that there are galleries far above us to be occupied by those whose field of action is the universe when they shall have served well in the heavenly hosts; a while under the trees, perhaps, and then 'Fall in for Jupiter' trumpeted out by some angel, and a squadron of bright spirits shall fly from the groves to some world where they are needed to help others who are trying in the midst of conditions like ours here to work out their own salvation.

"We must keep at it forever. The world moves above and below."

After his death the following memoranda were found among his private papers:

MEMORANDA

"Now when all is bright, the family together, and there is nothing to alarm and very much to be thankful for, it is well to look ahead and, perhaps, to say the things that I should wish known should I suddenly die.

"I wish to be buried in the school graveyard, among the students, where one of them would have been put had he died next.

"I wish no monument or fuss whatever over my grave; only a simple headstone—no text or sentiment inscribed, only my name and date. I wish the simplest funeral service, without sermon or attempt at oratory—a soldier's funeral.

"I hope there will be enough friends to see that the work of the school shall continue. Unless some shall make sacrifice for it, it cannot go on.

"A work that requires no sacrifice does not count for much in fulfilling God's plans. But what is commonly called sacrifice is the best, happiest use of one's self and one's resources—the best investment of time, strength and means. He who makes no such sacrifice is most to be pitied. He is a heathen, because he knows nothing of God.

"In the school the great thing is not to quarrel; to pull all together; to refrain from hasty, unwise words and actions; to unselfishly and wisely seek the best good of all; and to get rid of workers whose temperaments are unfortunate—whose heads are not level; no matter how much knowledge or culture they may have. Cantankerousness is worse than heterodoxy.

"I wish no effort at a biography of myself made. Good friends might get up a pretty good story, but it would not be the whole truth. The truth of a life usually lies deep down—we hardly know ourselves—God only does. I trust His mercy. The shorter one's creed the better. 'Simply to Thy cross I cling' is enough for me.

"I am most thankful for my parents, my Hawaiian home, for war experiences, and college days at Williams, and for life and work at Hampton. Hampton has blessed me in so many ways; along with it have come the choicest people of this country for my friends and helpers, and then such a grand chance to do something directly for those set free by the war, and, indirectly, for those who were conquered; and Indian work has been another great privilege.

"Few men have had the chance that I have had. I never gave up or sacrificed anything in my life—have been, seemingly, guided in everything.

"Prayer is the greatest thing in the world. It keeps us near to God—my own prayer has been most weak, wavering, inconstant, yet has been the best thing I have ever done. I think this is universal truth—what comfort is there in any but the broadest truth?

"I am most curious to get a glimpse at the next world. How will it seem? Perfectly fair and perfectly natural, no doubt. We ought not to fear death. It is friendly.

"The only pain that comes at the thought of it is for my true, faithful wife and blessed, dear children. But they will be brave about it all and in the end stronger. They are my greatest comfort.

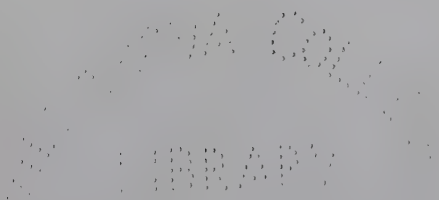
"Hampton must not go down. See to it, you who are true to the black and red children of the land and to just ideas of education.

"The loyalty of old soldiers and of my students has been an unspeakable comfort.

"It pays to follow one's best light—to put God and country first, ourselves afterward.

"Taps has just sounded. S. C. ARMSTRONG.

"HAMPTON, Virginia, New Year's Eve, 1890."



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